COOLEY HIGH

Screenplay

by

Eric Monte

THE COOLEY CODE OF CONDUCT

The Cooley Code of Conduct is printed to help the students in finding the right road to follow in school and out.

With everyone following this code improvement of the school is certain. The students make the school; therefore, it is necessary to have a code.

Everyone wants their school to be tops academically, and socially. Therefore, the code should be a way of life, that the students should follow.

Lets all band together to make Cooley a school to be proud!!!

The Cooley Code is as follows:

COOLEY STUDENTS ARE CONSCIOUS OF DEVELOPING GOOD CHARACTER:

1. We honor and respect our parents, teachers, and others who are responsible for our guidance.

2. We are honest.

3. We are punctual and meet every obligation promptly. We hand in our homework and classwork on time.

COOLEY STUDENTS RESPECT PROPERTY:

1. We do not destroy, damage, or tamper with school facilities, books or school grounds.

2. We do not throw paper, milk cartons, or any trash and deposit it in the proper containers.

3. We never destroy, damage or molest the property of our neighbors or public property.

4. We do not tear down any signs or notices on any bulletin boards or any other place within or without the school.

COOLEY STUDENTS OBSERVE RULES REGARDING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

1. We do not smoke on public transportation.

2. We do not talk loud or disturb other passengers.

3. We do not destroy public transportation whether there are passengers aboard or not.

4. We do not enter public transportation illegally.

COOLEY STUDENTS ARE AWARE OF PERSONAL APPEARANCE:

1. We wear clean, neat clothes.

2. We keep our bodies clean.

3. We avoid excessive ornamentation and extreme dress.

COOLEY STUDENTS BEHAVE PROPERLY AT ALL SCHOOL SOCIAL AND ATHLETIC FUNCTIONS

1. We are good sports. We are good losers as well as good winners.

2. We do have respect for our school and will do nothing that would reflect on Cooley's good name.

3. At social functions, we do follow all rules and respect those in charge.

4. Boys do not wear their hats in our school or at school functions within the building or within any other school building.

COOLEY STUDENTS PRACTICE SELF-DISCIPLINE:

1. We do not smoke in the school or on the street adjoining the school.

2. We do not drink alcoholic beverages.

3. We do not carry knives or other weapons.

4. We do not indulge in petty gambling, (such as pitching pennies or shooting dice).

5. We never use profanity.

In conclusion, I, as a student of Cooley Vocational High School, accept this code and will abide by it, to the best of my ability, in order to become a worthwhile citizen of my school, my community and my country.

"COOLEY HIGH"

1 EXT. EL TRAIN - DAY

Close on El train as it careens along the tracks. The CAMERA PULLS BACK as the train approaches REVEALING the Chicago skyline. It ROARS past row after row of project buildings. CAMERA PANS with it as it passes huge factory-like structure and HOLDS on the building as the train runs OUT OF THE SHOT. CAMERA ZOOMS INTO the writing on the building which says: COOLEY VOCATIONAL HIGH. Those titles FILL UP THE SCREEN. As the SOUND of the El train fades in the distance, we HEAR the nasal voices of a

TEACHER (V.O.)
The Cooley Code of Conduct has been prepared to help students in finding the right road to follow in school and out. With everyone following this code, improvements of the school is certain. The students make the school; therefore, it is necessary to have a code.

2 PAN DOWN TO ENTRACE OF COOLEY HIGH

Kids hanging in the doorway, sitting in the window smoking, the school looks like a bombed out relic of WWII. Broken windows, some boarded up, some not. The voices continue:

TEACHER (V.O.)
And to make the graduating class of 1964, the best ever at Cooley High. Now, class, let's read the cooley Code together.

CLASS (V.O.)
We do not destroy, damage, or tamper with school facilities, books or school grounds. We do not smoke in the school or on the street adjoining the school.

SCS. 3,4,5 OMITTED

6 EXT. STREET BY SCHOOL - DAY

CECIL, who is sitting in one of the school windows smoking, sees Preacher, Ghengis, and Pooter burst through the door. They join each other, slap five and a bus pulls up covering them. Cecil carries a large portable radio.

CLASS (V.O.)
We do not smoke on public transportation. We do not talk loud or disturb other passengers. We do not enter public transportation illegally.

And as the bus pulls away, we SEE our four guys hanging on the rear.

CONTINUED

6 CONTINUED:

CLASS (V.O.)
(continuing)
We do have respect for our school and will do nothing that would reflect on Cooley's good name.

CUT TO:

MAIN TITLES COME IN OVER VARIOUS SHOTS of the bus as it travels through the swank and luxurious high rise dwellings of the super rich on the Lake Shore bus route.

CUT TO:

6A EXT. ZOO - DAY

Big sign at main entrance of the zoo which reads: LINCOLN PARK ZOO, CHICAGO. The bus pulls up, the group jumps off and heads through the gates at a run.

6B TRUCKING SHOT

TIGHT FOUR SHOT of the boys as they run TOWARD CAMERA. Ghengis in the front, is wearing a windbreaker with the letter "C" on the front. On the back is lettered "All City Basketball." He's dressed poorly but has the grace of a natural athlete. Behind him is Preacher, a skinny little kid with glasses, wearing a sports jacket and tie, nice black slacks and, like Ghengis and Cecil, he has a cap cocked to the side of his head. Next is Cecil. He is short, has a thick neck and strong hands with stubby fingers. Pooter brings up the rear. He is the youngest and shortest of the group and has the gangliness of a puppy. They all laugh boisterously as they disappear around a curve.

6C MED. SHOT

we HEAR on a "B" track, a black newscaster giving a weather report and then recapping the news with the headlines, "Johnson declares war on poverty."

(CONTINUED)

6C CONTINUED:

GHENGIS
Hey, hey, Preach. Did you hear that? Johnson, man, is going to declare war on poverty.

Preach turns around, running backwards.

PREACHER
Damn, Ghengis. You better get home quick and barricade your doors, because they're going to attack your house first.

Everybody in the group cracks up. Ghengis runs and tries to grab Preach, who turns around and takes off.

OTHERS IN GROUP
Oh, wow, you let him talk about your home like that.

6D EXT. ZOO - ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY

of refreshment stand. We SEE our group running toward it in the b.g.

CLOSER ANGLE

Preach walks up to the counter and asks for a hot dog. The LADY inside slips one in a bun and hands it to him. As she hands Preach the hot dog she asks:

LADY
What would you like on it?

In the b.g., we SEE three pairs of hands reach up to the counter and two bags of popcorn and one bag of potato chips disappear.

PREACHER (O.S.)
Ketchup.

TWO SHOT - CONCESSION LADY AND PREACHER

LADY
Sorry, we don't have any ketchup.

PREACHER
Sorry, then I don't want the hot dog.

(CONTINUED)

6D CONTINUED:

He walks away. The woman shoots him a dirty look and puts the hot dog back. As she does that, around the other side we SEE Ghengis, Pooter and Cecil slip quietly behind her and they run to catch up with Preach, who is heading towards the gorilla area.

CUT TO:

7 EXT. ZOO - DAY

MED. CLOSEUP on a gorilla. He's sitting there being pummeled with marshmallows and peanuts.

VOICES (O.S.)
Move! Move, monkey, move! Do somethin'! Don't just sit there!

CAMERA PULLS BACK to WIDER ANGLE and we SEE Cecil, Ghengis and Preach throwing marshmallows.

PREACHER
Damn, Ghengis! Yo' mamma sure is lazy!

Ghengis shoves Preach playfully.

POOTER
Why don't y'all leave that gorilla alone?

GHENGIS
We goin' make him move if it takes all day.

POOTER
Leave him alone. You got to be kind to animals.

CUT TO:

8 WIDE ANGLE - GROUP

VOICES
Look out!

Everybody ducks as Pooter turns around and he gets hit right in the chest. Everybody starts laughing.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

CECIL
Pooter got hit with gorilla shit!

GHENGIS
Whew-ey! Does it stink!

PREACHER
Damn, he smell a lot better now than he ever has.

9 CAMERA MOVES IN on Pooter as he stands there shaking the shit off his shirt, while the rest are trying to avoid the smell.

CUT TO:

10 EXT. ELEVATED PLATFORM - CLOSE SHOT - DAY

as the train comes barreling into the station.

CUT TO:

11 MED. SHOT - TURNSTILES

Preach, Ghengis, Cecil and Pooter are running for the train. Pooter is bringing up the rear. Ghengis does a broad jump over the rail. Cecil one-hands it. Preach two-hands it and Pooter climbs over.

CUT TO:

12 ANOTHER ANGLE

As Pooter runs to catch up, brushing off his shirt as he goes. Preach goes back and grabs his collar and pulls him along.

PREACHER
Come on! We're gonna be late.

Cecil ducks in under Ghengis' arm. The doors shake as they try to close. Preach squeezes in.

POOTER
Wait a minute!

Ghengis grabs Pooter and pulls him on the train as the doors shut.

13 INT. EL TRAIN - CLOSEUP - POOTER

He is shaking off his shirt again. CAMERA PULLS BACK TO WIDER ANGLE TO SHOW Preach, Cecil and Ghengis gathered around him. The group very slowly moves away from him during the following:

PREACHER
Look, ain't nobody gonna know you got hit with gorilla shit.

GHENGIS
Yeah, I been with you ever since it happened and I ain't noticed it.

POOTER
Man, somebody gonna know. I gotta go someplace and take a shower.

PREACHER
I swear to you! Nobody's gonna know. Believe me!

They continue to move away.

CUT TO:

14 ANOTHER ANGLE - MALE PASSENGER

He sniffs.

15 WIDER ANGLE

SHOWING various faces reacting to the odor.

16 STILL WIDER ANGLE

A whole area of passengers on the train move away from Pooter, looking at him disgustedly.

17 OMIT SCENE 17

18 EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - LONG SHOT - DAY

There is a game in progress. Our group enters. CAMERA PANS DOWN to a MED. on Ghengis.

GHENGIS
(to a player)
Hey, let me show you how to do it.

19 WIDE ANGLE

The player throws him the ball. He catches it.

20 MED. CLOSEUP - GHENGIS

He jumps up in the air, does a one-hand shot.

21 MED. CLOSEUP - BASKET

as the ball drops through with a snap.

22 GROUP SHOT

PREACHER
That's the way he's gonna do it for Northwestern next year.

POOTER
Hey, y'all, come on, school's already out. I gotta get to the shower before they lock up for the night.

23 TWO SHOT

DAMON has a GUY jacked up against the playground fence in the b.g. The group comes up in the f.g.

DAMON
What do you mean you want change.

GHENGIS
Hey, Damon, what's happening?

GUY
(protesting)
But you asked for a quarter and I gave you a dollar.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

Damon punches the Guy and asnwers Ghengis.

DAMON
Ain' nothin' to it. Just keepin' busy.

CUT TO:

24 EXT. SCHOOL - LONG SHOT - DAY

The school is relatively quiet. A few straggling students exit the main entrance. We SEE Pooter, Cecil, Ghengis and Preach walk up.

CECIL
(to Pooter)
While you're in the gym, go to everybody's locker and get our gym shoes.

POOTER
Four pair of gym shoes?

PREACHER
Yeah, take a shower, get the shoes and we'll meet you over at Martha's.

Pooter looks at them like they're crazy and exits. The CAMERA FOLLOWS Cecil, Preach and Ghengis as they cross the street to Martha's.

25 EXT. MARTHA'S - DAY

They approach Martha's. It is obviously a greasy spoon from the density of the grease that covers the name "MARTHA'S" that's written across dirt-darkened windows in a used-to-be-bright red paint. The building almost sways with the SOUND of the MUSIC that pours out. DOROTHY, a tiny, cute girl, is coming out with a hamburger.

DOROTHY
Ghengis.
(sees Preach)
Hi, Preach!
(back to Ghengis)
Ghengis, have you seen Tyrone?

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

GHENGIS
I ain't seen him today. Wasn't he in school?

DOROTHY
Tyrone wasn't in history. 'Cause y'all missed Mr. Mason's class, so he moved the mid-term up from Friday to Monday.

PREACHER
God damn, Cecil. I thought we had a week to study.

GHENGIS
Monday?!! Oh, wow! Man, that kills our whole weekend.

CECIL
Oh oh. That means I gotta go back and get my history book.

He exits. Ghengis calls after him.

GHENGIS
Hey, man, get mine, too!

PREACHER
(to Ghengis)
You're the star. You don't have to worry about your grades.

DOROTHY
You don't have to worry, either. You know you failing.

Ghengis laughs.

PREACHER
(rhyming)
The only thing I know...
is that your momma's a hoe.

He feels her ass and she swings at him. Preach exits running.

DOROTHY
Oh, by the way, I'm giving a quarter party tonight!

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (2)

GHENGIS
A belly rub!

DOROTHY
(snapping)
It ain't goin' to be no belly rub, it's goin' to be a nice quarter party.

GHENGIS
I gotta study.

DOROTHY
Well if you see Tyrone, tell him to come.

GHENGIS
Now where did Preach go?

DOROTHY
(exiting)
I'll give you one guess.

DISSOLVE TO:

26 INT. MARTHA'S

CLOSE on dice as they roll to a stop on seven. CAMERA PULLS BACK and we SEE Preach. He is gambling with STONE and ROBERT. Stone is a big, hulking youth with close-cropped hair and thick lips. A demeanor that cries "brute," he doesn't seem stupid as much as dangerous. Robert is a tall, skinny version of Stone. The dilapidated old building which houses Martha's is divided into two large rooms. In the front portion there are a few tiny booths with cheap red plastic covers. The back half is empty except for an oil stove and a JUKEBOX that is BLASTING, and half a ton of kids doing the Jerk. Lots of NOISE and dancing dialogue.

GHENGIS
Hey, Preach, man, come on!

PREACHER
Strike 'em. Seven.
(picks up money)
Still shooting a dime.

Stone drops a dime. Preach throws.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

GHENGIS
Come on! You know Martha said she'd throw your ass outta here forever next time she caught you gambling.

PREACHER
I'm coming.

STONE
Hey, man, you can't go. You don't win my money then walk. You either make me or break me.

Ghengis steps up prepared to defend Preach.

PREACHER
(to Stone)
How much money you got left?

STONE
Fifty cents.

Preach bends over and picks up the dice.

PREACHER
(to Ghengis)
It don't take but a second to win fifty cents.
(to Stone)
Shooting fifty cents... am I faded?

27 CLOSEUP - STONE

He hesitates. Then,

STONE
You faded.

BRENDA (O.S.)
(angrily)
Excuse me!

They look up.

28 GROUP POV

BRENDA stands, holding a malt, a load of books and is struggling to keep her shoulder bag from slipping off her narrow shoulders.

29 CLOSEUP - PREACH

He smiles.

PREACHER
Let the lady pass.

30 FULL SHOT - GROUP

ROBERT
Why don't you eat someplace else?

BRENDA
Why don't you gamble someplace else?

PREACHER
'Cause we're gambling here, sweet thing.

BRENDA
This is a restaurant, not an alley.

GHENGIS
Keep steppin', mamma. If we wanted to be preached to, we'd go to church.

BRENDA
You need to go to church.

PREACHER
(sings)
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

CUT TO:

31 MEDIUM CLOSE - PREACH

Preach takes napkins and starts dropping them in her path like flowers.

32. MEDIUM CLOSE - BRENDA

She looks at him coldly and walks back the way she came.

33 FULL SHOT - GROUP

They all laugh.

34 CLOSEUP - PREACH

He watches admiringly.

35 PREACH'S POV

Brenda is marching resolutely toward the front counter.

PREACH (V.O.)
Ain't she fine?

36 TWO-SHOT PREACH & GHENGIS

GHENGIS
You ain't gettin' none of that. That high yellow bitch, looking for Sidney Poitier, M.D., PH.D. and you just N.I.G.

PREACH
If I don't get some of that, I'll give up your mama.

GHENGIS
A dollar say you don't .

PREACH
Bet!

STONE (V.O.)
Man, will you shoot.

Preach throws dice.

PREACH
Lick die!

37 CLOSEUP - DICE

They roll and stop on seven.

38 TWO SHOT - PREACH & GHENGIS

Preach smiles. CAMERA PULLS BACK TO FULL SHOT of group as Preach pockets the money and smiles broadly at Ghengis. Martha enters holding a meat cleaver.

CONTINUED

38 CONTINUED:

MARTHA
All right, Jackson, I warned you. Out.

PREACHER
But Martha... We was quitting, Martha, I swear...

Martha advances on him.

MARTHA
Out!

Everybody in the place starts looking at them.

PREACHER
Martha, let me tell you...

MARTHA
Jackson, you got till the count of five to get your lying ass out of here. One...

Preach starts backing up.

PREACHER
I needed the money to help this st...

MARTHA
Two...

Preach is still backing up.

PREACHER
... starving blind man.

MARTHA
Three.

Preach turns around and runs. Everybody laughs.

CUT TO:

39 EXT. STREET - MED. SHOT - COOLEY HIGH IN B.G. - DAY

Pooter is walking down the street with JOHNNY MAE and SANDRA. His shirt is balled up in his hand, four pair of gym shoes are hung by the laces around his neck.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

He is wearing a short open windbreaker and no shirt.

POOTER
You don't believe me, but I remember the day I fell for you. It was last year, September twelfth, nineteen sixty-three at two P.M.

JOHNNY MAE
Pooter, you say that to every girl you talk to.

POOTER
I ain't lying, Johnny Mae, I love you.

TYRONE catches up with them.

TYRONE
What you lyin' about now, Pooter?

JOHNNY MAE
He says he loves me.

TYRONE
He loves anything in a skirt!

JOHNNY MAE
Look who's talkin', all of y'all girl crazy.

They come up to Preach, counting his money, and Ghengis standing near Martha's.

PREACHER
I plead guilty. You wanna give up some of them drawers.

Sandra hits Preach playfully.

SANDRA
Oh, you just going to rap to her in front of me.

Everybody keeps on walking except Preach, Ghengis and Sandra.

Johnny Mae crosses and leans on Ghengis while Pooter starts handing out the gym shoes.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

SANDRA
(continuing; to Preach)
You got your nerve!

JOHNNY MAE
You don't havta worry. He can't tear himself away from them dice long enough to get any.

Preach takes Johnny Mae's hand dramatically.

PREACHER
(very gallantly)
For you I could give up gambling for a whole hour.

Johnny Mae snatches her hand away. Sandra hits Preach again.

SANDRA
You won't even do that for me.

Tyrone and Pooter laugh. Tyrone puts his arm around Sandra.

TYRONE
For you, I'd give up his mamma.
(beat)
Hell, I'd give up his mamma for Lassie.

CUT TO:

46 INT. PREACH'S HOUSE - MED. SHOT - DAY

MCU Mrs. Jackson.

MRS. JACKSON
I'm late for work, baby. There's stew in the icebox. Make sure Tooty eats her supper. Bye!

She hugs Dee and gives Tooty a kiss on the cheeck.

DEE & TOOTY
Bye Mama!

MRS. JACKSON
Bye Leroy.

46 CONTINUED:

PREACH
See you later, Mama.

She exits and Preach watches her as she turns the corner. He then goes to the cabinets and takes out a jar of peanut butter.

DEE
You ain't supposed to be eatin' that peanut butter, Mamamsays you're supposed to have the stew.

PREACH
Will you get outta my face.

The PHONE RINGS. Preach drops his sandwich. Tooty drops her books. Dee dives for the phone with the others. Preach gets to it first and he's pushing them away. He grabs the phone.

TOOTY
It's for me!

DEE
It's for me!

PREACHER
This might be Momma, get back.

Preach pushes them back forcefully. Tooty reaches for the phone.

TOOTY
Give me the phone.

Preach pushes her away.

PREACHER
Ain't nobody gonna be calling you.

The PHONE RINGS. Preach picks it up and speaks into it.

PREACHER
(continuing)
Hello.

His face drops and he hands the phone to Tooty.

PREACHER
(continuing)
It's for you.

46 CONTINUED:

CAMERA HOLDS on Tooty as she picks up the phone. Preach goes back to the table.

TOOTY
(into phone)
Oh, Cheryl. Bobby! Comin' over your house, girl? When?

Preacher grabs his coat and heads for the door.

* SCENES 46A and 46B omitted *

CUT TO:

40 INT. GHENGIS' HOUSE - DAY

As the CAMERA PANS around the room, we HEAR the middle of an argument.

MRS. MORRIS (O.S.)
I ain't playin' with you, Jimmy Lee. These welfare checks ain't enough to live on.

JIMMY LEE (O.S.)
(in wonder)
What makes you think I got money? I got to come over here to eat.

The CAMERA STOPS on TONIA washing the dishes.

CAMERA CONTINUES PAN to MR. MORRIS who is sitting at the table. He is short and slender with a greying beard not quite three days old. His face is shriveled and shrunken and his neck is thin and frail, but there is an air of strength about him. He wears overalls and a golf cap. He has a cane propped up against his legs and from the comfortable way he uses it, we know it's merely an extension of his arm.

MR. MORRIS
(forcefully)
Baby, leave the boy alone. You know he'll give us some money when he gets some.

The CAMERA CONTINUES its PAN to MRS. MORRIS. She is a big, six-foot tall, heavy-set woman. She is in a drab bathrobe.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

MRS. MORRIS
He got enough money to buy all them fancy clothes.

CUT TO:

41 MED. SHOT - JIMMY LEE

He is dressed exquisitely, with glittering jewelry, and colorful, well-cut clothes. Rings on every finger. Everything he says is pleasant and cheerful, but dramatic. He is always rehearsing for a con.

JIMMY LEE
Momma, I need these clothes to work in.

42 GROUP SHOT

MRS. MORRIS
You never worked a day in your life.

JIMMY LEE
Momma, that sure is cold. Most of the time I'm the one that pays the rent here.

SOUND of a BABY CRYING.

43 CLOSEUP - TONIA

She turns toward the cry.

CAMERA PANS with Tonia as she exits the kitchen into the living room.

CUT TO:

44 INT. LIVING ROOM - TONIA

She enters the living room. In the center of the room is an old pot-bellied stove with a pipe going up the wall. The baby bed in the corner has two babies in it. One of them is crying. The door opens and Ghengis enters. He goes directly to a dresser, picks up some envelopes and starts rifling through them.

45 TWO SHOT

Tonia picks up the baby.

The baby continues to cry. We HEAR the argument continuing in the kitchen.

JIMMY LEE (O.S.)
If I had the money I'd give it to you. I just got out of jail. I ain't got no money.

MRS. MORRIS (O.S.)
Why don't you pawn some of that jewelry.

GHENGIS
Mama, did I get a letter today?

MRS. MORRIS (O.S.)
(wearily)
If you don't see it up there on the dresser, it ain't come.

Ghengis flashes a look of disgust. The baby is still crying.

Ghengis starts angrily toward the bathroom.

CUT TO:

47 INT. BATHROOM - GHENGIS' HOUSE

Ghengis is sitting with water and shoe wax in front of him and a shoe in one hand. From the angle, we can SEE a hole in the bottom of the shoe as he shines it.

JIMMY LEE (O.S.)
I told you, Momma, I'll bring you the money back tonight.

MRS. MORRIS (O.S.)
You better!

SOUND of DOOR SLAMMING. Ghengis looks around in disgust. turns his head and goes back to shining his shoes.

Ghengis looks around for something. Ghengis crosses and exits bathroom.

CUT TO:

48 INT. HALLWAY - CLOSE ON GHENGIS

as he looks in a stand by the bathroom.

Ghengis picks up a shoe brush. CAMERA FOLLOWS him back into the bathroom. SOUND of SPLASHING. Ghengis looks.

CUT TO:

49 GHENGIS' POV

A little baby is splashing a letter in the toilet.

50 MED. CLOSE - GHENGIS

GHENGIS

Aw, Tommy!

CUT TO:

51 ANGLED OVERHEAD SHOT

We SEE the baby dunking an envelope into the toilet. He looks up smiling at the SOUND of Ghengis' voice.

52 MED. TWO SHOT

Ghengis reaches over and pulls him away from the toilet. He sees the letter and looks surprised. He takes it between his forefingers and holds it up. He is surprised and happy.

53 MED. CLOSE - THE ENVELOPE

It says, "Mr. Richard Morris, 318 West Oak Street, Chicago, Illinois" and in the upper left-hand corner, it says, "Northwestern U. Athletic Department."

54 MED. SHOT - GHENGIS

His eyes get big. He opens it gently and pulls it out and it's dripping wet. He unfolds it nervously and reads.

55 OMITTED

56 CLOSEUP - GHENGIS

He brightens up with a great big grin. SOUND of wild cheering and screaming.

CUT TO:

Scene 57 Omitted

58 EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT

We HEAR a CHOIR at the peak of a gospel song. MUSIC BLASTS out.

CHOIR (V.O.)
Jesus, Jesus.

CUT TO:

59 ANOTHER ANGLE

The street is alive with people, bars seem to pour them out. Most are dressed in their finest and the style tells you if their purpose is sinful or saintly. MUSIC is flowing from inside, pouring out into the street. People are drunk and gay and happy and loud and sparkling. They have an air of movement and excitement about them. The people from the church are dancing in the streets with tambourines. A couple of people come walking down the street where the LADY from the church stops them with...

SANCTIFIED LADY
Praise Jesus! Praise Jesus!
Jesus will save you.

OTHERS
Hallelujah!

CAMERA PANS with a couple as they move on past and PICKS UP Preach, Ghengis, Tyrone and Pooter walking in the opposite direction of the church people, dancing and playing tambourines. Preach, Tyrone and Pooter are all congratulating Ghengis.

PREACH
Hey, man, that is really outtasight.

TYRONE
A scholarship. Dynamite!

POOTER
That's really hip, man.

Group exits into alley.

60 EXT. ALLEY - MED. ON GROUP - NIGHT

CAMERA DOLLIES with them as they walk through the alley.

GHENGIS
Just think, man, next year when I git outta Cooley... Northwestern U.

TYRONE
You'll probably be first string your freshman year.

Ghengis does an imaginary fake and hook shot.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

Tyrone and Pooter start wrestling with him and hitting him playfully. Ghengis lashes back playfully and backs into Preacher who is holding a bottle of wine.

CUT TO:

MED. CLOSE

PREACHER
Hey, man, watch it! You're gonna make me drop this wine.

FULL SHOT - GROUP

TYRONE
Aw, man, you just uptight 'cause you ain't goin' nowhere.

PREACHER
Shit, I ain't worried about it, I'm goin' to Hollywood and be a famous writer.

POOTER
Aw, nigger, your ass ain't goin' nowhere but jail.

PREACHER
How you know?

POOTER
Man, 'cause you ain't nothin'! What kinda sucker goin' come from this and git to be a big time Hollywood writer? You crazy.

PREACHER
Hey, man, did you know that Hitler was once a corporal in the army and he took over Germany? So why can't I be a writer? Some of them cats make millions.

TYRONE
Man, you think somebody gonna give you a million dollars for that junk you write?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: (2)

TYRONE (CONT'D)
Have you heard Preach's poetry? Hey, dig... 'Your eyes are like limpid pools of eternity, swallowing up my soul.'

They all break up.

TYRONE
(continuing)
No, no, wait a minute! You ain't heard it all...

He takes out a sheet of paper. Ghengis is trying not to laugh. Tyrone is trying to get it out, but he's laughing too hard. Finally,

TYRONE
(continuing)
... 'liquid dreams and visions of you beckon to my throbbing manhood!'

Tyrone, Pooter and Ghengis fall out laughing. Preach is infuriated.

ALL
(laughing)
Throbbin' manhood?!!!
Swallowin' up my soul!?

PREACHER
(grabbing Tyrone)
Who told you to go in my notebook?

Ghengis pulls Preach off of laughing Tyrone and drags him back.

61 TWO SHOT - PREACH AND GHENGIS

GHENGIS
Aw, man, cool it!

Preach snatches away from Ghengis.

PREACHER
He didn't have no business goin' in my notebook.

62 MED. CLOSEUP

Pooter is laughing and pushing against the wall for support.

POOTER
Why don't you hit him with your 'throbbin' manhood'!?

63 MED. SHOT

Everybody falls out laughing again.

64 MED. CLOSEUP - PREACH

PREACHER
You think it's funny because I want to be something besides a factory worker or a football player. That's because you a bunch of stupid niggers that don't know shit.

Preach looks at him and snatches away. CAMERA FOLLOWS him as he crosses the alley, looking balefully at Tyrone.

65 PREACH'S POV

Pooter and Tyrone are laughing. Ghengis crosses over and nudges him.

66 TWO SHOT - PREACH AND GHENGIS

GHENGIS
Hey, man, forget them! We supposed to be celebrating. Come on, have some wine.

He opens the wine and pours some out.

GHENGIS
(continuing)
This is for the brothers who ain't here.

67 TWO SHOT - TYRONE AND POOTER

CAMERA PULLS BACK INTO A GROUP SHOT as they run to Ghengis.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

POOTER
Man, you pourin' out our wine!

GHENGIS
This is for the brothers who ain't here.

TYRONE
Forget them! They ain't here, they don't get none.

Pooter snatches the wine from Ghengis and takes a swig.

GHENGIS
There's a lotta brothers dead or in jail and you gotta give 'em a little respect.

Tyrone takes the bottle from Pooter.

TYRONE
You pour your wine, we'll drink ours.

He takes a swig. Everybody starts laughing, even a begrudging, hesitant Preach. CAMERA PANS IN TIGHT on wine bottle as laughter builds.

68 thru 72 OMITTED

MATCH CUT TO:

73 INT. TENEMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

CLOSE on bottle as SOUND OF MUSIC joins SOUND OF LAUGHTER. CAMERA PULLS FURTHER BACK TO SHOW the railing of the stairway, which is falling off. Up at the top of the stairs there's a little red light. We HEAR loud MUSIC... really bookin', upbeat music. Dudes are hanging out around the door, drinking wine. One dude has a chick up against the wall, rapping to her and kissing her neck. In the apartment some people can be SEEN dancing in the b.g. (Music is like "Mickey's Monkeys" by Smokey Robinson or "Everybody Loves to Cha Cha Cha" by Sam Cooke.) Dorothy is at the apartment door collecting quarters and Robert is trying to get in without paying. He leans over her, trying to be cool and secretive.

ROBERT
Hey, momma, come on, let me in, you know I'll give you a quarter later.

CUT TO:

74 TWO SHOT - ROBERT AND DOROTHY

DOROTHY
Uh uh. I'm sorry. If you ain't got a quarter, you can't get in.

Stone ENTERS SHOT and hands Robert the bottle.

STONE
Later for that jive bitch.

Robert takes the bottle and Stone heads down the stairs.

ROBERT
Aw, that sho' is cold, and I thought we was tight.

DOROTHY
(snapping)
We are tight, but if you ain't got a quarter, you can't get in.

Robert follows Stone.

CUT TO:

75 INT. TENEMENT - BOTTOM OF STAIRS

Ghengis, Preach, Tyrone, and Pooter enter and start up the stairs as Stone and Robert are coming down drinking wine.

STONE
Hey, Tyrone, Ghengis. What's goin' on, y'all?

GHENGIS
Ain't nothin' to it. How's the party!

STONE
I don't know... jive broad won't let us in. I ought to kick her ass.

TYRONE
Who's on the door?

STONE
Dorothy.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED

TYRONE
Oh, Dorothy on the door? We over like a fat rat in a cheese factory.

Tyrone bounds up the stairs. Stone offers the others a joint.

Ghengis and Preach take a hit.

CUT TO:

76 OMITTED
and
77

78 TWO - SHOT DOROTHY AND TYRONE

Tyrone walks over and leans against the door very casually.

TYRONE
Hey, momma, what's happening? How ya been?

Dorothy turns around surprised, catches herself, and turns her head away.

DOROTHY
(angrily)
What the hell you mean, how you been?

TYRONE
I've been lookin' for you since yesterday baby.

DOROTHY
Aw. Don't give me that. You got my number, you wouldn't even call!

TYRONE
Oh, well, baby, like I told you... they took out my phone. I didn't have no dimes to be runnin' to the corner.

78 CONTINUED:

DOROTHY
(thawing)
Oh, well, you coulda done somethin'...

Tyrone pulls her face around toward him gently and romantically.

TYRONE
I did. I came over.

Dorothy snatches her head away.

DOROTHY
Sheeit!

Tyrone puts his arm around her and pulls her gently to the side.

TYRONE
Oh, momma, comere, step outside and let me talk to you about it.

In the b.g. Preacher enters the top landing with Ghengis and Pooter.

DOROTHY
I gotta watch the door.

TYRONE
(to Preacher)
Preach, Preach. Watch the door, man.
(to Dorothy)
Come on baby.

He takes her over to the side of the building. Preach crosses over to them and the others follow behind him.

79 OMITTED

80 INT. PARTY - MED = SHOT

It is an apartment with a large room. The holes in the walls show slats of evenly spaced wood, like the ribs of a starving man. Grease wax paper covers one window entirely, while a rag is stuffed in a hole in the corner of another. The young, smartly dressed youths that fill the place don't notice the ceiling whose plaster hangs, or the way the only couch tilts because only one side has legs. The record

80 CONTINUED

player is on a little stand and next to it is an orange crate w a stack of forty-five's on top of it. The only goodlooking piece of furniture is a breakfront with two french doors. The glass panels show books inside. Couples dance wildly.

CAMERA MOVES to...

81 THREE SHOT

Preacher, Ghengis and a smiling Pooter are watching.

CUT TO:

82 GROUP'S POV

All the lights are on. The couples are dancing mad versions of the jerk. Pooter heads for a small group of girls.

83 and 84 OMITTED

84A MED. THREE SHOT - GHENGIS, PREACH, TYRONE

Tyrone slides up to Ghengis.

GHENGIS
Hey, that was pretty smooth!

TYRONE
Yeah, rap thirteen always works!

CUT TO:

85 ANOTHER ANGLE

Pooter appraoches the girls and does a fancy dance step.

POOTER
Pooter's here and ready to jam!

The girls move away from Pooter and head toward Ghengis and Preacher.

85A CLOSEUP - POOTER

His face falls.

86 ANOTHER ANGLE

GIRL #1
Hi, Ghengis!

Ghengis looks around. The three Girls run up to him.

GIRLS
Hi, Ghengis. How ya goin'?

GHENGIS
(nods)
Hi, baby, hey, what's goin' on?

GIRL #2
Ghengis, you want to dance?

GHENGIS
Yeah, baby, but not right now.
I'll get ya later.

He kisses her on the cheek.

CUT TO:

ANGLE - PREACHER AND GHENGIS

PREACHER
Why did you let that go by?

GHENGIS
I got to scope the whole scene
first. You better make your
move before Sandra gets here.

86A TWO SHOT - JOHNNY MAE AND VERONICA

They are standing by the record player, shifting through forty-five's. Johnny Mae nudges Veronica.

86B JOHNNY MAE AND VERONICA'S POV

Brenda passes Preacher, Ghengis and the Girls with a FRIEND.

PREACHER
Hey, dig that.

Preacher looks, taps Ghengis and they start to follow the Girls.

87 TWO SHOT

Johnny Mae and Veronica watch with tight jaws.

CUT TO:

88 TWO SHOT - BRENDA AND FRIEND

BRENDA
I told you we shouldn't have come.

FRIEND
I'm tired of staying at home.

BRENDA
We could have gone to a movie. I don't like these quarter parties, they always turn into belly grinds.

FRIEND
We'll just stay a little while.

A long beat.

BRENDA
(acquiescing)
Okay...

Preacher and Ghengis approach them.

PREACHER
Hi there.

They look around and Brenda's face instantly gets a look of disgust. She turns away, while her friend smiles invitingly at Ghengis.

PREACHER
(continuing; nastily)
Well don't fall over! Look I've tried being nice, but you walk around with your ass up on your shoulders. Well, let me tell you one thing.

He steps up, puts his arms around her and says sweetly:

PREACH
(continuing)
You sure are fine.

She pushes him away. Ghengis laughs.

BRENDA
Why don't you go somewhere?

Still holding her hand, Preacher clutches it to his chest.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

PREACHER
Your place or mine?

Brenda pushes Preacher's arm away.

BRENDA
Don't you understand the meaning of the word 'no'?

PREACHER
No!

Brenda walks off. Preacher turns to Ghengis.

PREACHER
(continuing)
She loves me.

GHENGIS
Blew it again, huh chump?

PREACHER
I just ain't come up with the right lie yet.

Ghengis laughs. CAMERA FOLLOWS him as he walks off.

CUT TO:

ANGLE - POOTER AND GHENGIS

POOTER
Don't mess with that record. Y'all got all night to grind.

GHENGIS
Shut up and turn off the lights.

89 TWO SHOT - TYRONE AND DOROTHY

They are standing at the door next to the breakfront.

DOROTHY
My mother said not to turn the lights off.

Tyrone bends over to kiss her pushing her gently against the breakfront. She moves away from it.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

DOROTHY
(continuing)
My mother said not to touch the breakfront.

TYRONE
Why not?

DOROTHY
'Cause we ain't paid for it yet.

Tyrone looks at her, puts her against the wall, kisses her while he reaches over to the wall switch and turns off the light.

CUT TO:

90 MED. CLOSE - GHENGIS

He's standing talking to a chick, looking around, scoping the scene. His eyes stop and he does a take.

CUT TO:

91 MED. CLOSE - LORETTA

A gorgeous eighteen-year-old, she is sitting on the leaning couch with her legs crossed, smoking a cigarette and looking fine. A guy comes over and reaches out his hand. She looks at his hand and then up at him, and shakes her head "no." She turns her head away as if he didn't exist at all.

CUT BACK TO:

92 MED. CLOSE - GHENGIS

He smiles and straightens up. CAMERA FOLLOWS as he makes his way to her through the crowd.

93 MED. CLOSE - LORETTA

She's looking to the side and then straight in front of her. She looks up.

GHENGIS (O.S.)
Hi, my name is Richard Morris and I came to talk to you.

He sits down next to her.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED:

GHENGIS
(continuing)
By the time I get up I want to know your name, address and telephone number... not necessarily in that order.

She smiles.

LORETTA
My name is Loretta Brown. I live at three ten Chicago Avenue and my telephone number is nine six six seven three three four. Why don't you call Friday. I watched you play all last season and I'm probably your biggest fan.

Ghengis smiles appreciatively, gets up and pulls her gently to the dance floor.

GHENGIS
* All right. *

Preacher stands there and turns as a cute little girl goes by. Preacher grabs her arm.

PREACHER
Hey, momma, what's happenin'. Where you been?

VERONICA
I don't wanna hear it. I know you're only seventeen and I don't go with babies!

PREACHER
Hey momma, it don't make no difference how old I am, shit, age only tells you how long you've lived... not how much. I might be a motherfucker... and you goin' to blow it, just 'cause I'm a year younger than you.

She pushes his hand away.

VERONICA
I told you I don't go with no youngsters.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED: (2)

Preacher tries to pull her back.

PREACHER
Well, shit. Now's a great time to break a bad habit.

She moves her head out of the way.

VERONICA
What would my friends say, if I told them that I was goin' around with a seventeen year old.

PREACHER
They probably ask you where they can get one.

* *

She walks off.

CLOSEUP - PREACHER

His disappointed face.

94 MED. SHOT - CORNER OF PARTY

Pooter is asking a girl to dance and she refuses him. He rushes to the next who says no and another guy comes right up behind him and the girl practically leaps in his arms.

95 CLOSEUP - POOTER

He pouts and leans against the breakfront.

95A TWO SHOT - TYRONE AND DOROTHY

dancing to a slow record. Dorothy is snuggled dreamily in Tyrone's arms. CLOSE ON her face as her eyes get big.

MED. SHOT - POOTER

leaning on the breakfront.

BACK TO DOROTHY AND TYRONE

dancing.

DOROTHY
Hey, Pooter, will you get the hell off the breakfront.

CUT TO:

96 INT. BEDROOM - MED. SHOT - BRENDA

The door is behind her. Preacher enters. Almost as if she sensed an enemy, Brenda straightens up, turns around and looks at him.

BRENDA
(dryly)
Why don't you get out of here.

Preacher looks at the book she's reading and his eyes light up.

PREACHER
Oh, wow, Browning!

He takes the book out of her hand.

PREACHER
(continuing)
I like 'Sonnets to the Portuguese.' This is dynamite!
(he reads from book)
'How do I love thee, let me count the ways...'

BRENDA
You like poetry?

PREACHER
Yeah, this is really pretty.

BRENDA
I didn't know that.

PREACHER
Oh, I dig it. You like love poetry, the cat you should really check out is a dude named Walter Benton. He's dynamite!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

PREACHER (CONT'D)
He got this poem... 'Were I Pygmalion or God, I would make you exactly as you are... in all dimensions. From your warm hair to your intimate toes would you be wholly in your own image. I would change nothing, add or take away.' Yeah, that's dynamite! And it fits you, you know. Yeah, that poem really fits you. I'm gonna give you that... as soon as I steal a copy.

Brenda smiles.

97 OMITTED

98 INT. PARTY ROOM - THREE SHOT

Johnny Mae, Beverly and Veronica are huddled together, whispering, giggling and glancing around.

CUT TO:

99 THE GIRLS' POV

Pooter is asking a girl to dance with him and she's shaking her head, "no." The lights are dim and the MUSIC is SLOW.

CUT BACK TO:

100 THREE SHOT

Johnny Mae is pushed out of group toward Pooter.

CUT TO:

101 MED. TWO SHOT

Pooter and Johnny Mae are two-stepping. She grinds to him.

102 CLOSEUP - POOTER

His eyes get big and he looks around and starts smiling. Sweat starts breaking out on his face.

103 TWO SHOT - POOTER AND JOHNNY MAE

The MUSIC ENDS and Johnny Mae starts to leave.

POOTER
Don't move!

She tries to pull away. He grabs her tighter.

JOHNNY MAE
What's the matter with you?

POOTER
Shhh! I got a hard-on. Can't you feel it?

Pooter reaches in his pocket. He's holding her with one hand, and trying to take a handkerchief out of his pocket with the other hand. The lights come on and everybody moves off the floor.

JOHNNY MAE
(getting loud)
That's your problem. I ain't staying in the middle of the floor.

POOTER
Shhh! Shhh!

JOHNNY MAE
Don't shhh me.

She pulls away. He gets the handkerchief out and puts it in front of himself like a Toreador.

POOTER
We gonna fight the bull! We fight the bull.

He sits down in a chair, still trying to hide his hard-on.

104 THREE SHOT

Johnny Mae, Beverly and Veronica are cracking up.

CUT TO:

105 MED. SHOT - DOOR

Dorothy is standing there talking to Damon.

DOROTHY
Look! I don't want you comin' in here if you gonna start some trouble.

DAMON
Aw, girl, what you talkin' about?

The lights go out.

DOROTHY
You always breakin' up parties fightin'. You ain't gonna break up this one.

The MUSIC comes up.

DAMON
Aw, I just came here to have a good time like everybody else.
(hands her a quarter)
Here.

DOROTHY
I ain't playin' with you, Damon.

He walks TOWARDS CAMERA. In the b.g. we SEE Dorothy putting the quarter in the can. CAMERA SWINGS around as Damon settles into place beside the breakfront. He looks up.

106 DAMON'S POV - TWO SHOT

Loretta and Ghengis are grinding and kissing.

107 MED. CLOSE - DAMON

His face gets very rigid. The CAMERA FOLLOWS him over to the couch. He comes up to Ghengis and snatches him around.

(CONTINUED)

107 CONTINUED:

DAMON
Hey, man, don't nobody put their hands on my ol' lady.

Loretta jumps in front of Damon.

LORETTA
Damon, I'm sorry, come on let's go!

DAMON
You better get outta my way! I'm kickin' his ass.

GHENGIS
Look, man, I apologize, but that's as far as it goes.

Dorothy enters.

DOROTHY
I ain't gonna have no trouble in here. If you wanna fight you take it outside.

She jumps in front of him. Tyrone enters.

TYRONE
Hey, momma, look, cool it!

He gently tries to lead Dorothy away. Dorothy snatches away.

DOROTHY
Cool it my ass! They ain't fightin' in my house.. Any fightin' and this is my last party.

DAMON
(to Ghengis)
You goin' take an ass-kickin', chump.

Damon pushes Dorothy away.

TYRONE
Hey, wait a minute!

CONTINUED

107 CONTINUED:

He jumps toward Damon. Damon turns around before Tyrone can act and hits him in the jaw, knocking him down.

GHENGIS
Hey!

Damon swings. Ghengis catches the blow on his forearm. The fight starts. Tyrone is trying to get to Damon but is being held by Dorothy.

DOROTHY
No, Tyrone, don't fight! Don't fight. Please don't fight, Tyrone.

TYRONE
Get outta my way! Don't nobody hit me in my jaw.

He pushes her out of the way.

DOROTHY
Who you pushin'?

She punches him in the jaw. He falls back into the breakfront, rocking it. He turns around, holding his jaw.

108 ANOTHER ANGLE

Damon has fallen back into a table. Ghengis dives at him. Damon pushes him over. Ghengis keeps on going past Damon, and bumps into a crowd. He hits a dude.

CONTINUED

108 CONTINUED:

DUDE
Watch that!

He punches Ghengis and Ghengis punches him back. Damon grabs Ghengis, spins him around, and punches him.

109 ANOTHER ANGLE - POOTER

He's in the chair with the handkerchief in his lap. He jumps up as a body falls in his chair. He looks around.

CUT TO:

110 INT. BEDROOM - TWO SHOT - PREACHER AND BRENDA

They're sitting on the bed, his arm around her waist, talking.

BRENDA
When are you gonna let me read some of your poetry?

PREACHER
I never let nobody read my poetry.

We HEAR a CRASH. Preacher jumps up.

111 ANOTHER ANGLE

Pooter bursts in the room.

POOTER
It's a fight! It's a fight!

There is a lot of NOISE in the b.g.

PREACHER
(to Pooter)
Is there a back way out?

POOTER
No, man.

Preacher moves back, away from the door.

POOTER
(continuing)
... but Ghengis is in there.

Preach stops short.

112 TWO SHOT - PREACHER AND BRENDA

PREACHER
(to Brenda, bravely)
I'm gonna go in for Ghengis.
I'll rap to you later.

BRENDA
Alright.

He walks into the hall with Pooter. They stop and look.

113 REVERSE SHOT - PREACHER'S POV

The fight is in progress.

CUT TO:

114 ANOTHER ANGLE

Preacher looks and shakes his head as part of the breakfront comes flying by.

PREACHER
I ain't goin' in there.

114A MS DOROTHY

She is holding several pieces of the breakfront, screaming.

115 EXT. DOROTHY'S TENEMENT - NIGHT

Preacher, Ghengis, Tyrone and Pooter are out in front. Gheng is sitting on the stoop, sucking on his knuckles. Tyrone is leaning against the building. Pooter is pacing up and dow Preacher is sitting next to Ghengis. He's mad.

TYRONE
You really kicked Damon's ass!

PREACHER
What a helluva time to start a fight. Blew my rap!

TYRONE
You sure Cecel comin'?

GHENGIS
He said he'd meet us at the party.

CONTINUED

115 CONTINUED

PREACHER
You know he always late.
(dryly)
I ain't high no more.

POOTER
Hey, man, that weed Stone had was bad.

PREACH
Yeah, but that was Sam's stuff, and you know he won't sell to us.

GHENGIS
But he'd sell it to my brother.

PREACHER
Then we'd better rap to you brother.

Cecil ENTERS SCENE, dressed to kill.

CECIL
Hey, what y'all doin' out here? Ain't you goin' to Dorothy's party?

Exasperated, they look at him and walk off.

CUT TO:

116 INT. BAR - MED. SHOT - NIGHT

The light is so dim you can barely see the counter that goes the length of the bar and wraps around just before it gets to the door.

Scene 116A Omitted.

117 MED. SHOT - JIMMY LEE

The CAMERA PANS over along the bar and stops on Jimmy Lee, who is talking to a white trick. His clothes are expensive, not loud, but very hip. There is a diamond sparkling on the lapel of his brown doublebreasted suit, and the long collar shirt with the neat tie gives him a touch of elegance in his costume. He begins his hustle to a white dud

JIMMY LEE
Man, I can get you all the chicks you want.

He pulls out photographs and shows the dude (TRICK), who is looking around nervously.

117 CONTINUED:

TRICK
Shhh! Cool it... Cool it.
Keep your voice down.

JIMMY LEE
All these chicks they live in
different places. It's a hassle
to drag you around town so I
got pictures of all of them.
Pick the one you want.

TRICK
(points)
That one.

JIMMY LEE
Come with me and I'll call her.

CUT TO:

118 INT. BAR - PAY TELEPHONE - NIGHT

Jimmy Lee brings Trick along to listen to phone call.
He steps into booth, leaving the door open, and dials.

JIMMY LEE
(into phone)
... You got time now, baby?

He pauses.

PHONE VOICE
At the tone the time will be,
nine fifty-five exactly.

* *

JIMMY LEE
(continuing)
Hey, dig it. I got this cat
that wants to come over... Yeah..;
Right... We'll be right there.

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED:

Hangs up phone and turns to Trick.

JIMMY LEE
(continuing)
Hey, man, you're in luck. But first...

He takes an envelope out of his inside pocket.

JIMMY LEE
(continuing)
... I gotta stop and give this cat his money back.

TRICK
What?

JIMMY LEE
These bitches steal, so to keep customers safe, I hold their money for them.

TRICK
Oh, yeah?

CUT TO:

119 EXT. WELLS STREET BAR - MED. SHOT - NIGHT

Jimmy Lee and the Trick walk briskly to the car, a Pontiac. As they get in Jimmy Lee climbs into the passenger side.

JIMMY LEE
This chick is a real freak. She's so good, you might not last more than thirty seconds.
(stops, seriously)
But we've got a set policy that if you can't hold out for five minutes we give you a second try free of charge.

Trick starts the car and takes off with spinning wheels. CAMERA FOLLOWS the car as it drives off, and stops on the group as they cross and exit into bar.'

CUT TO:

* 120 INT. WELLS STREET BAR - NIGHT *

The kids enter. JOHNNY RED, the bartender, is washing dishes. The group cross over to him.

GHENGIS
Hey, Johnny Red, you seen my brother?

JOHNNY RED
Jimmy Lee? He left here about thirty seconds ago.

GHENGIS
Shit! Was he goin' to work?

JOHNNY RED
Yeah. He had a customer with him.

CUT TO:

* 121 OMITTED *

* 122 INT. CAR - MED. TWO SHOT - CAR PULLS UP TO CURB *

JIMMY LEE
Yeah, man, look now, this chick's really outtasight, but she's one of them thieves, so to keep you from getting robbed... 'cause I don't want no unhappy customers...

He takes out an empty envelope.

JIMMY LEE
(continuing)
Why don't you put your money in here. I'll seal it and hold it for you 'til you finish.

The Trick cautiously takes out his money and gives it to Jimmy Lee. Jimmy Lee starts getting out of the car.

CUT TO:

123 EXT. BUILDING - MED. SHOT - NIGHT

Jimmy lee goes with Trick to the door of the building. The trick exits into building and Jimmy Lee calls after him.

JIMMY LEE
Okay, you go up there, ask for Louise. It's on the top floor in the back, knock on the last door on your left...all the way to the back.

TRICK
Yeah, okay, yeah.

JIMMY LEE
I'll wait for you in the car.

JIMMY LEE moves toward the car. He takes the money out of the envelope which he nonchalantly drops to the ground, and walks off counting money. CAMERA HOLDS on him until he pockets the money.

123A INT. BUILDING - DARK HALLWAY

Trick coming on dark floor feeling his way along hall. He finally reaches the last door and he knocks. A huge, burly guy opens it.

MAN
What you want, honky.

TRICK
I'm looking for Louise.

MAN
No goddamn Louise live here.

124 OMITTED

125 EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Jimmy Lee is hurrying along street and runs into group.

GHENGIS
Hey, man!

JIMMY LEE
Hey, y'all. What's goin' on?

JIMMY LEE hands Ghengis some money.

125 CONTINUED

JIMMY LEE
(continuing)
Here, give this to momma. What kinda trouble yall gettin' into?

GHENGIS
(pockets money)
Nothin'! Looking for some weed.

JIMMY LEE
Well y'all come to the right place. Dig, let's get off the street.

CUT TO:

126 OMITTED

127 EXT. SANCTIFIED CHURCH - LONG SHOT - NIGHT

The building is dark and quiet. CAMERA PANS to the corner of the alley and into a MED. CLOSEUP of Robert looking surreptitiously up and down the street.

128 ANOTHER ANGLE

The alley wherein a new sixty-four Cadillac with an open door is parked. There appears to be no one in it. CAMERA DOLLIES with Robert as he crosses through the all He reaches the car door.

CONTINUED

128 CONTINUED:

ROBERT
Hey, hurry up!

CAMERA PANS over Robert's shoulder to Stone who is down on the car floor, between the seat and pedals, underneath the dashboard, working with some wires.

STONE
Shh! Shit, man, I'm goin' as fast as I can!

Suddenly Stone freezes, hearing something.

STONE
(continuing)
What's that?

ROBERT
I don't hear nothin'...

REVEREND (O.S.)
C'mon, baby, c'mon. You know you gotta get outta here.

Stone immediately straightens up to form a TWO SHOT, with Robert standing in front of the car door. In the b.g. the Church door starts to open. Stone and Robert exchange glances, shut the car door and make a mad dash behind a line of garbage cans. They look at each other, then...

129 REVERSE SHOT - THEIR POV

The REVEREND steps into the alley with a drunken WOMAN.

REVEREND
C'mon, Sister Blake. Let me take you home.

WOMAN
Oh, Reverend Dennis, I ain't ready to go home now. Not this soon after the Lord let us find each other.

REVEREND
But, Sister Blake, don't you think your husband goin' miss you?

(CONTINUED)

143 CONTINUED:

WOMAN
He ain't goin' be home for an hour.

REVEREND
As the Bible says, waste not, want not.

CUT TO:

130 TWO SHOT - STONE AND ROBERT

behind the garbage can. Robert starts to sneak off; Stone stops him.

131 REVERSE SHOT - THEIR POV

The Reverend is trying to ease the Woman toward the car. He stops, hearing the VOICES of Cecil, Ghengis, Tyrone, Pooter and Preach singing: "You're a Thousand Miles Away" and FADING TO:

GHENGIS
Pooter, you can't sing no bass, you tenor. Tyrone, you baritone. Cecil, you bass and Preach... you stay out of it.

PREACHER
Forget you, man.

The Reverend grabs the Woman and rushes back toward the Church.

WOMAN
We goin' back in, baby?

REVEREND
Yeah, c'mon, hurry up. I don't want nobody to see us.

132 ANGLE

They go back into the Church.

133 TWO SHOT - STONE AND ROBERT

Stone is grinning at Robert. Robert returns a puzzled look. He doesn't understand. They move toward the car.

134 LONG SHOT - DOWN ALLEY INTO STREET

Cecil, Pooter, Tyrone, Preacher and Ghengis pass by the alley.

135 MED. SHOT - STONE AND ROBERT

moving toward the car.

ROBERT
C'mon, man. Let's get outta here.

Stone opens the door and sits comfortably in the car. Robert is nervous. The car pulls out of the alley, flying.

136 MED. SHOT

The church door opens and the Reverend peeks out.

REVEREND
(surprised)
My car!

The Woman tries to pull him back in.

WOMAN
C'mon, c'mon.

He snatches away from her.

REVEREND
My car! My car!

He runs toward the street.

CUT TO:

137 thru 140 OMITTED

141 EXT. MARTHA'S - NIGHT

Preacher, Ghengis, Pooter, Cecil and Tyrone are standing on the corner under the street light singing and passing a number. The Cadillac pulls up with Robert and Stone in it. Robert looks out from the passenger side.

(CONTINUED)

141 CONTINUED:

ROBERT
You turkeys still walking?

Ghengis' eyes light up and he walks over to the car and puts his hand on it.

PREACHER
(to Ghengis)
Hey, man, be cool.

He looks at Ghengis. Ghengis opens the door and looks back at Preacher.

GHENGIS
Come on.

CECIL
Not me.

POOTER
Me, neither.

TYRONE
No way.

GHENGIS
(to Preacher)
Hey, Preach. You ain't jive, come on.

Preacher looks at him a beat then shrugs his shoulders, crosses over to the car.

DISSOLVE TO:

142 INT. CADILLAC - NIGHT

Ghengis and Preacher are in the back seat, Stone is on the passenger side of the front seat and Robert is driving. Ghengis has a number in his mouth, takes it and passes it forward to Stone.

ROBERT
Let's have some music.

He turns on the RADIO. Rhythm and blues is HEARD.

GHENGIS
Wow, this rides really nice. Now I see why everybody digs Cadillacs.

(CONTINUED)

142 CONTINUED:

Stone takes a hit.

STONE
Yeah, Jack, never thought you'd be ridin' in one of these, did you?

PREACHER
You kiddin', do it all the time.

ROBERT
You wanna drive?

Preacher looks surprised.

PREACHER
Sheeit, man, I used to go racin' every summer. I was the baddest dude around.

GHENGIS
Nigger, I know you since you was eight and you never was no damn racer!

PREACHER
Oh, man, forget you. You don't know everything about me. Pull over! Let me drive!

CUT TO:

143 EXT. CADILLAC

as it pulls to the curb. The front and back doors open. Robert goes from front to back; Preacher from back to front. The two doors close.

CUT TO:

144 INT. CADILLAC

Preacher is flicking buttons, flipping switches, rolling the windows up and down, etc., while everyone watches him.

STONE
Fool! What are you doin'?!

145 CLOSEUP - PREACHER

He looks wonderingly at the knobs and buttons before him.

PREACHER
I'm lookin' for the 'on' switch.

146 GROUP SHOT

Ghengis laughs.

STONE
It's already on.

PREACHER
(innocently)
Really? No kidding!

STONE
So you have to do nothin' but step on the gas.

We HEAR the engine revving loudly. Preacher is looking curiously at Stone. Ghengis is shaking from laughter. Robert is also laughing. Stone is a little pissed.

STONE
(continuing; dryly)
You gotta put it in gear.

PREACHER
(still innocent)
Oh! Yeah! I got it!

CUT TO:

147 EXT. CADILLAC

as it SQUEALS backward.

STONE (O.S.)
Stop! Stop!

The car halts suddenly, rocking back and forth.

CUT TO:

148 INT. CADILLAC

Stone is holding his nose. Ghengis and Robert are getting off the floor. Preacher looks up, chagrined.

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED:

PREACHER
'R' means reverse.

STONE
Get out of the car! Let me drive!

PREACHER
Aw, man, let me drive it.

ROBERT
Man, you can't drive!

PREACHER
Man, I got it together now. I know what I'm doin'!

GHENGIS
Aw, Preach, git back here.

Stone sits back, looking balefully at Preacher. Preacher scratches his head, then drops the gearshift lever.

149 EXT. CADILLAC

as it shoots off down the street.

150 ANOTHER ANGLE

Run-by.

CUT TO:

151 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

A stoplight is in the f.g. The Cadillac is moving at a leisurely pace, approaching the corner. It stops abruptly, causing the car to rock back and forth.

152 INT. CADILLAC

Ghengis and Robert get off the floor in the back. Stone is holding his slightly-bleeding nose. Preacher is smiling gleefully.

PREACHER
I told ya that I'd get the hang of it after awhile!

(CONTINUED)

152 CONTINUED:

STONE
Why you...

He stops, straightens and his eyes get big. He turns around quickly.

PREACHER
What's the matter with you?

STONE
(under his breath)
The man.

Preacher also turns around.

153 PREACHER'S POV

A police car with two policemen who are looking at them. Preacher turns back around.

PREACH
If they bust us, remember, I'm just a hitchhiker.

GHENGIS
Dig it. Be very cool. Maybe they'll think it's your ol' man's.

CUT TO:

154 MED. SHOT - POLICE CAR

The OFFICERS are looking intently.

155 REVERSE SHOT - POLICE CAR'S POV

CAMERA PANS the Cadillac from the bumper to the windows. HOLD ON four, grinning black teenagers; three of which are very ragged and wearing impoverished clothes and caps.

156 TWO SHOT - THE COPS

looking at each other.

157 OMITTED

158 INT. CADILLAC - TWO SHOT - STONE AND PREACH FROM BEHIND

STONE
(in a whisper)
Take your hands off the wheel.

Preacher starts to turn to him.

PREACHER
What?

STONE
Don't move, keep smiling, take your hands off the goddamn wheel!

CUT TO:

159 MED. SHOT - THE STREET

The stoplight changes. The Cadillac SQUEALS away, then slows down and jerks back and forth.

CUT TO:

160 INT. CADILLAC - MED. SHOT - NIGHT

STONE
Man! Let me drive this damn thing!

Preacher looks up at the mirror, scared.

PREACHER
Oh, shit!

161 MED. CLOSEUP - REARVIEW MIRROR

Red lights shining.

162 INT. CADILLAC - MED. SHOT

STONE
I ain't goin' to jail.

162A CLOSEUP - ACCELERATOR

Stone's foot stomps on Preacher's forcing the accelerator down.

CUT TO:

162B EXT. CADILLAC - MED. SHOT

The car shoots off down the street, wobbling back and forth. A beat later the police car is chasing by the SCREEN. We HEAR SIRENS.

CUT TO:

162C INT. CADILLAC - MED. SHOT

Stone and Preacher are struggling over the wheel.

STONE
Give it here!

PREACHER
I got it!

They struggle as Robert and Ghengis bounce around in the back seat.

GHENGIS
Stop this damn thing!

CUT TO:

163 EXT. STREET - LONG SHOT - NIGHT

The Cadillac bursts INTO THE SCENE with a SCREECH of tires and brakes. It spins around a few times and stops, facing the other direction.

CUT TO:

164 INT. CADILLAC

Preacher straightens up.

PREACHER
(confident)
I got this mother.

He steps on the accelerator, taking off, unaware of the spin they've just gone through.

165 CLOSEUP - PREACHER

The police car goes by. Preacher blinks his eyes and shakes his head, astounded.

(CONTINUED)

165 CONTINUED:

STONE (O.S.)
Watch where you're goin'!

Preacher looks at the squad car.

PREACHER
I am!

GHENGIS
Look out!

Preacher spins around.

166 REVERSE SHOT - PREACHER'S POV

The back of a truck is getting close.

167 EXT. CADILLAC

It swerves around the truck just in time to meet an oncoming streetsweeper. It skids, just barely making it between the two obstacles.

168 EXT. POLICE CAR

It makes a U-turn and slowly passes the streetsweeper, then takes off after the weaving Cadillac.

CUT TO:

169 INT. CADILLAC - MEDIUM SHOT

Stone dives for the wheel.

ROBERT
Will you let somebody else drive?

Preacher pushes Stone away.

PREACHER
I got it.

CUT TO:

170 EXT. CADILLAC

It jumps a curb onto the sidewalk in a project area and swerves into a big field and bumps along back and forth. CAMERA PANS down the street to the police car. It slows, not able to find an entrance to the field.

CUT TO:

171 INT. CADILLAC

Stone is trying to turn the steering wheel. Ghengis is trying to pull Preacher's hand loose and Robert is choking him.

PREACHER
You makin's me mess up.

ROBERT
(choking Preacher)
Let go!

172 LONG SHOT - FIELD

The police car is on the field, driving with as much confusion as the Cadillac. The squad car arrives, adding to the confusion. We HEAR a GUNSHOT.

CUT TO:

173 INT. CADILLAC - MED. SHOT

PREACH (O.S.)
Let's get outta here!

He pushes Stone away and steps on the accelerator. Robert and Ghengis fall back.

174 EXT. LONG SHOT

The Cadillac takes off, the police car lines up in pursuit.

175 INT. CADILLAC

STONE (O.S)
Where you goin'?

PREACHER (O.S.)
(driving intently)
I'm goin' through there.

176 REVERSE SHOT - STONE'S POV

A gate opening between two posts.

CUT TO:

177 INT. CADILLAC - MED. SHOT

Stone falls on the floor.

STONE (O.S.)
You crazy?

Ghengis falls on the seat with Robert.

GHENGIS (O.S.)
This car too big to go through there!

PREACHER (O.S.)
(surprised)
It is?

He falls on the seat with his hand over his head.

CUT TO:

178 EXT. CADILLAC

It goes through the gate perfectly. The police car skids to a halt, then takes off in another direction around the gate.

179 INT. CADILLAC

Preacher gets up, sees that they are safe and grabs the steering wheel. The others get up wonderingly and look back.

180 REVERSE SHOT - GROUP POV

the fading gate.

STONE (O.S.)
(with awe)
You made it through there?

181 INT. CADILLAC - MED. SHOT

GHENGIS (O.S.)
(shocked)
You kidding?

PREACHER (O.S.)
(smugly)
Man, I told you. I can drive my ass off!

GHENGIS (O.S.)
Let's get outta here! Now!

PREACHER (O.S.)
Okay, man. I'll park around the corner and we can get the hell out.

CUT TO:

182 EXT. CADILLAC

It pulls around a corner and hits the back of a double-parked car with a man (GUY #8) inside kissing a GIRL.

CUT TO:

183 INT. CADILLAC

ALL (O.S.)
Oh, shit!

184 EXT. STREET

The man in the double-parked car sticks his head out and hollers:

GUY #8 (O.S.)
Whiplash!

The doors fly open. Stone and Robert, Preacher, and Ghengis scatter as the police car SCREECHES up and the cops jump out and circle around, trying to decide which direction to go after which kid. The guy in the car with the girl is still screaming.

GUY #8 (O.S.)
Whiplash! Whiplash!

185 EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Preacher and Ghengis are running together and they fall against the wall in the gangway. They're breathing hard. They look at each other and collapse in hysterics.

DISSOLVE TO:

186 and 187 OMITTED

188 INT. CECIL'S ROOM

Close on Pooter who is turning away from open closet toward CAMERA flashing badge.

POOTER
You are under arrest for being ugly.

188A INT. CECIL'S ROOM - WIDE SHOT

Preach is laying across the bed reading a comic book in the f.g. Ghengis is sitting on the dresser with a book in front of him. Tyrone is laying on the floor on his stomach, reading. Cecil is sitting on the edge of the bed, hanging over with his history book.

PREACH
Man, why don't you quit playing before I knock you out.

Preach pushes Pooter away.

CECIL
Man, you better leave Jeffrey's badges alone.

POOTER
Look at em, don't they look real?

CECIL
Na, they don't look real, Jeffrey got them with some cornflakes boxtops.

GHENGIS
Man, I can't never remember any of these names and dates.

188A CONTINUED:

POOTER
Come on ya'all, let's go to the movies.

PREACH
(looks at them)
Yeah.

There's a KNOCK at the door. They all groan.

CECIL
Who is it?

Everybody answers, including JEFFREY'S VOICE O.S.

ALL
Jeffrey!

The door opens and he enters the room. Jeffrey is wearing cowboy boots with big metal cleats on the heels and spurs so that he makes a lot of noise when he walks.

JEFFREY
I want my basketball.

CECIL
Well take it and get outta here, man, and quit runnin' back and forth.

JEFFREY
This is my room. I can come into my room anytime I want.

Jeffrey crosses into the room to the chest of drawers. He opens a drawer takes two big firecrackers out.

TYRONE (V.O.)
How we 'sposed to study like this?

Jeffrey shuts the drawer, puts the firecrackers in his pocket, crosses to the closet and gets the basketball, clanking all the way. Cecil grabs him and throws him out of the room and slams the door.

CECIL
Now get outta here and stay out.

188A CONTINUED:

GHENGIS
Damn, man, he's more trouble then all my brothers and sisters put together.

CECIL
Well, we don't have to worry about him anymore.

There's a KNOCK at the door and everybody looks at Cecil

CECIL
Goddammit, Jeffrey.

He charges to the door, rips it open, a LOUD explosion of a firecracker. Everybody jumps. The other kids crack up.

189 EXT. HALL - CECIL'S APT.

GHENGIS
How much you got, Preach?

PREACH
I ain't got but fifty cents.

GHENGIS
You don't have show fare.

PREACH
Dig it!

TYRONE
Damn.

GHENGIS
Son't start that! How many people have show fare? Raise your hands.

GHENGIS
(continuing)
Oh, wow, we only have enough money for four of us. That means that one of us ain't goin'.

And they all look at Pooter.

189 CONTINUED

POOTER
Uh, ah, if I ain't goin', ain't nobody goin'.

189A PREACHER

Takes Jeffrey's badge out of his pocket, looks at it and smiles.

PREACH
Hey, Ghengis come on; the genius strikes again.

CUT TO:

190 OMITTED
and
191

192 EXT. STREET - MED. SHOT - DAY

Preacher and Ghengis are on the sidewalk talking with two women who are obviously WHORES. CAMERA PANS to TIGHT GROUP SHOT.

PREACHER
Hey, momma, fifteen dollars is a lotta money.

FIRST WHORE
Well, baby, you gotta pay for what you get.

Preacher flashes a badge.

PREACHER
You're under arrest.

FIRST WHORE
What? Huh? You don't look like cops!

GHENGIS
(cool)
That's why they hired us, baby. 'Cause we don't look like cops.

Preacher pushes her against the wall.

PREACHER
All right, turn around.

FIRST WHORE
Wait a minute!

(CONTINUED)

192 CONTINUED:

PREACHER
(to Ghengis)
Man, go down and call a squad car.
(to first Whore)
We gonna book you bitches for prostitution.

SECOND WHORE
Hey, baby, this is my best day!

FIRST WHORE
You'll make us lose a lot of money.

PREACHER
I can't help that.

FIRST WHORE
Look man, give me a break. I just got out. Whaddaya say? Please?

Preacher looks at Ghengis and smiles.

PREACHER
We take bribes.

FIRST WHORE
How much you want?

GHENGIS
How about $10.

She reaches in her bra and hands him the money. Second Whore looks at the badge.

SECOND WHORE
Wait a minute. Wait a minute.

Preacher starts to pocket the badge but the Second Whore grabs his arm and snatches it away from him. She turns it over and sees written on it the LONE RANGER.

SECOND WHORE
Hey, they're stickin' us up!
They ain't nothin' but kids!

BOTH WHORES
(shout)
Police! Police!

The whores come after them screaming at them and trying to hit them with their purses. Preacher and Ghengis run off like two scared rabbits.

193 thru 199 OMITTED

200 THE SCREEN

As "GODZILLA VS THE THING" enters. SOUND of SCREAMS from the audience.

CUT TO:

201 THE GIRLS

fixed in fear. Ghengis and Preach smile at each other. Ghengis turns to smile at Tyrone, who has Dorothy the same way; Tyrone smiles at Cecil who has Beverly the same way; Cecil smiles at Pooter, who sits angrily alone.

202 CLOSEUP - POOTER

as he looks at the group.

203 POOTER'S POV

FOUR SHOT of Preacher, Ghengis, Sandra and Johnny Mae huddled together with Godzilla and the Thing battling on the screen in front of them. Behind Pooter there is a guy who is blowing smoke past him. Pooter leans back and says:

POOTER
Hey, man, will you stop blowing your cigarette smoke my way?

GUY (O.S.)
Pay attention to the movie, mind your own business.

POOTER
Hey, man, stop blowing that smoke my way. Put that cigarette out.

GUY (O.S.)
All right.

CAMERA FOLLOWS Guy's hand as he purposely puts the lighted end of the cigarette in the back of the seat that Pooter is sitting in.

INTERCUT INSERTS of the seat beginning to smolder with scenes of Godzilla and the Thing along with playing the fellas making out with the girls against the SOUNDTRACK of the picture.

CUT BACK TO:

203 CONTINUED:

POOTER

Sniffing and looking back at the Guy and he doesn't see any cigarette smoke.

203A FOUR SHOT - PREACHER, GHENGIS, SANDRA AND JOHNNY MAE

Preacher winks at Ghengis as he turns to kiss Sandra. Sandra straightens up.

SANDRA
Preach, do you smell smoke?

Preacher, looking down the row of seats at the other kids.

PREACHER
That's just Dorothy's drawers burning.

DOROTHY
Ooooh, Preach...

Everybody cracks up.

SANDRA
No, no I'm serious!

PREACHER
I don't smell nothin'.

Pooter's seat starts to get a little hot and the smoke is getting thick from under him and he gets up and he looks at all the smoke and his seat and he yells:

POOTER
Fire!

Several kids surround Pooter. They dump their coke cups on the smouldering seat and on Pooter as well.

CUT TO:

204 Pooter stands their dripping.

205 OMITTED

206 EXT. THEATER ALLEY

a group of people file out past Johnny Mae, Ghengis, Preach and Sandra.

JOHNNY MAE
What we gonna do now?

GHENGIS
Oh...we'll think of somethin'...

He looks at Preacher who smiles and looks at Sandra.

CUT TO:

207 INT. HALLWAY - MED. SHOT - DAY

Ghengis and Johnny Mae and Preacher and Sandra are in the darkened hallway of an old tenement. Ghengis and Preacher have the girls against the wall and are feeling on them and kissing them.

SANDRA
Uh uh, Preach, don't! Go feel on that skinny bitch, Brenda! I know all about the party.

PREACH
Aw, Sandra, you know I don't love nobody but you.

GHENGIS
C'mon, Johnny Mae...

JOHNNY MAE
No. You'll tell.

GHENGIS
I swear I won't tell a soul.

JOHNNY MAE
Well, I'll do it if she'll do it.

GHENGIS
Come on Sandra.

PREACH
Yea, come on Sandra.

207 CONTINUED:

SANDRA
Uh uh, I ain't givin' you nothin'.

208 CLOSEUP GHENGIS

He walks to the stairs.

GHENGIS
Hey, Preach, come here.

Preach follows Ghengis to a corner of the hall.

PREACH
Excuse us, ladies.

CUT TO:

209 EXT. STREET - TWO SHOT- GENGIS & PREACH

GHENGIS
(whispering)
Get that chick outta here! She's blowin' my action.

PREACH
Aw, man, I can always get it off with Sandra. She just givin' me a hard time.

GHENGIS
No, man, I don't want her here. Take her someplace else , Jack.

PREACH
I can dig it.

210 BACK INSIDE

Preacher and Ghengis move back to the girls.

JOHNNY MAE
I'm ready to go home.

CONTINUED

210 CONTINUED:

GHENGIS
Oh, baby, wait a minute. I wanna talk to you. I was thinkin' ... maybe you and I...

He leans over to kiss her.

PREACHER
(clearing his voice)
Hey, look, I don't wanna break up nothin', but I gotta split. And so I tell you what I'm gonna do. I'm goin' and I'm takin' Sandra home...

GHENGIS
Damn! You don't have to make a speech. Just go!

PREACHER
Oh. Yeah. Okay, c'mon Sandra.

They exit down the stairs, out of the building.

211 MED. TWO SHOT - JOHNNY MAE AND GHENGIS

kissing. He unbuttons her blouse.

JOHNNY MAE
Uh uh, Ghengis.

She pushes his hand away, as he mumbles:

GHENGIS
Oh, Johnny Mae, don't be that way...

He pushes her hand away, which she puts around his neck. The blouse is open and he kisses her bare chest. As he reaches her breasts, WE HEAR ORGAN MUSIC.

DISSOLVE TO:

212 EXT. CHURCH - LONG SHOT

Preacher walks up and leans against the building.

(CONTINUED)

212 CONTINUED:

CAMERA PANS to the opening door with people coming out, including Brenda, who sees Preacher and smiles. Preacher takes her hand as she approaches.

DISSOLVE TO:

213 MONTAGE

Brenda and Preacher spending Sunday afternoon together on the roof of a tenement building.

213A UNDERNEATH THE EL TRACKS

213B SITTING ON AN OLD TIRE IN A VACANT LOT

214 ON ONE OF THE OLD RICKETY PORCHES OF A TENEMENT BUILDING IN THE BACK

In each they are close and sharing their love of poetry. CAMERA MOVES IN on the last scene of the MONTAGE.

They kiss.

PREACHER
(continuing)
Let's go to my house.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

214 CONTINUED:

PREACHER (CONT'D)
My sisters have gone with my ol' man for the weekend... and, besides, nobody's ever at my house anyhow.

CUT TO:

215 INT. PREACHER'S BEDROOM - CLOSE TWO SHOT - DAY

Brenda and Preacher are lying in the bed underneath the blankets. She is nestled in his arm and he looks self-satisfied.

BRENDA
I'd feel better with somethin' on... Hand me my panties.

PREACHER
(looks a beat)
Hand you your panties?

BRENDA
I'm so embarrassed. This is the first time I ever did anything like this.

PREACHER
That's cool... nothin' to be ashamed of or embarrassed about...

BRENDA
Yeah.

He looks over and then back at her. He eases out from under the blanket, takes a pillow and puts it in front to cover himself and backs away from her. He gets her panties and tosses them over to her. She covers herself up completely with the blanket. He turns his back, grabs his underwear real quick and puts them on with his back to her. He feels more comfortable now. She emerges from the covers, smiles at him.

BRENDA
(continuing)
... my brassiere...

PREACHER
Okay.

(CONTINUED)

215 CONTINUED:

He picks it up and throws it to her. She vanishes under the blanket momentarily, emerges and smiles. He watches her. He snaps his fingers excitedly, remembering something.

PREACHER
Wait'll I tell Ghengis I won.
He owes me a dollar!

She stiffens up. He catches himself.

PREACHER
(continuing)
Aw, shit, look... I really...

BRENDA
You bet?!!!

PREACHER
I really didn't mean that...
It's not like it sounds.

She jumps out of bed, grabs her skirt and puts it on.

PREACHER
(continuing)
Wait a minute... wait a minute
... Let me talk to you, at least.

She starts crying.

BRENDA
A bet! A bet! I'm nothing but
a lousy dollar bet!

PREACHER
Wait a minute... don't get all
upset... I didn't mean it that
way. You mean a lot to me. I
just bet, I...
(pause)
I don't know...

* The door opens and Dee and tooty come in. *

DEE
Hey, did Mamma leave?

PREACHER
Didn't I tell you to knock.

(CONTINUED)

215 CONTINUED

Dee sees Brenda with her blouse in hand.

DEE
I'm telling.

PREACHER
Get out of here.

Brenda breaks down and runs out with her blouse in her hand.

PREACHER
(continuing)
Brenda...wait a minute...Let me explain.

He stands there, very depressed.

TOOTY
Soon as Mamma get home I'm tellin'.

Preach shuts the door in their faces.

CUT TO:

216, OMITTED
216A,
217

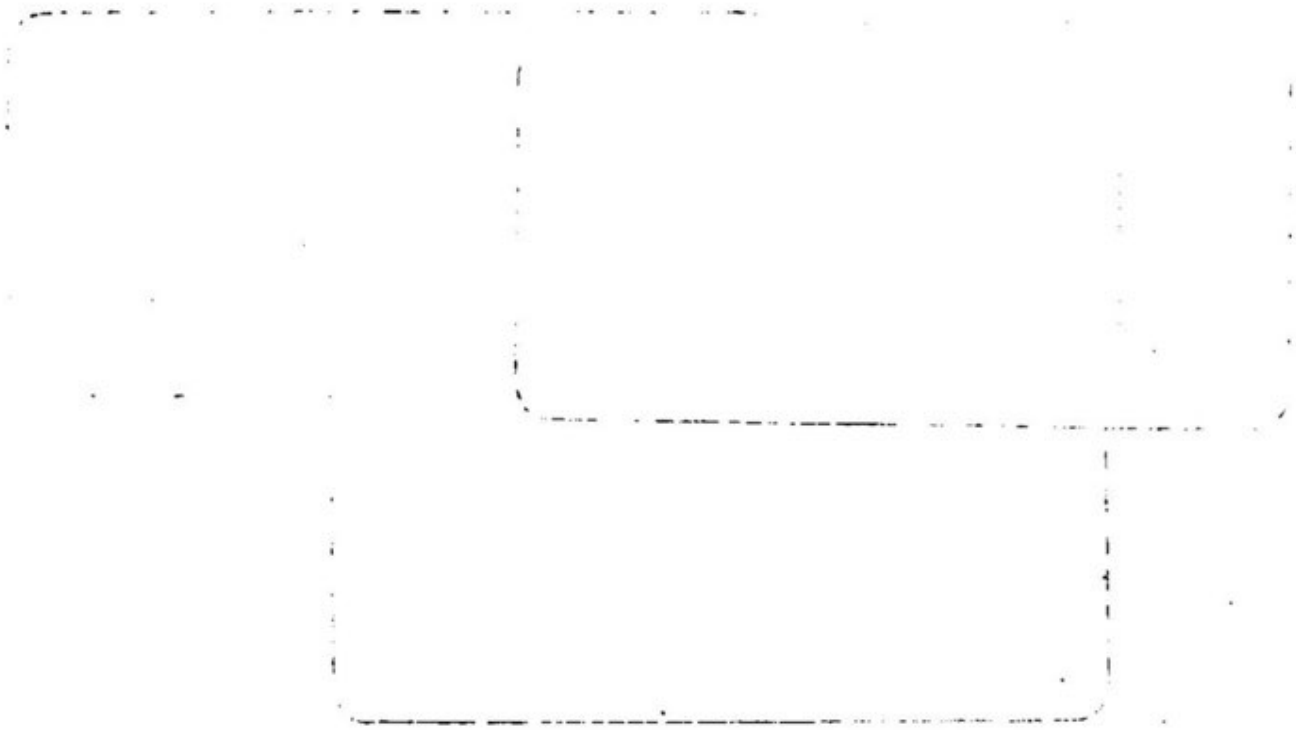
218 EXT. STREET NEAR COOLEY HIGH - LONG SHOT - DAY

PREACHER
(dejectedly)
My best friend, dragging me down to be hanged.

Ghengis does not look up.

GHENGIS
The history test is this morning and you goin' to be there or we all fail.

PREACHER
Mr. Mason is going to have my ass for missing school all last week.



219 INT. HALLWAY - SCHOOL - MED. SHOT - DAY

Preacher and Ghengis walk up the corridor. Cecil and Tyrone come running up.

TYRONE
You got your history thing together?

PREACHER
Man, I don't believe in failin' no history test.

CECIL
What if Mr. Mason don't let you take the test?

TYRONE
Yeah, there won't be no need for you to take it if you gettin' kicked out of school.

PREACHER
I'll tell Mr. Mason I had the flu.

GHENGIS
Man, I thought you could lie. That ain't no good lie.

(CONTINUED)

219 CONTINUED:

PREACHER
That's why he'll believe me... 'Cause all my lies are original. Look, when we take the test, don't copy me exactly. Change one and make it wrong.

CUT TO:

220 ANOTHER HALLWAY - LONG SHOT - DAY

Preacher, Ghengis, Cecil and Tyrone turn the corner. Preacher stops.

221 CLOSEUP - PREACHER

He looks.

222 REVERSE SHOT

Brenda is at the wall locker opening it up. She is putting some books in and taking other books out.

223 MED. SHOT - PREACHER AND GROUP

PREACHER
Hey, y'all walk on. I'll catch up with you.

ALL
Okay, man.

They continue on. Preacher walks over to Brenda. When he gets to her he puts a great big smile on his face.

PREACHER
Hey, Brenda, what's happenin'?

She turns, looks at him, turns back again and starts cramming books into her bag.

PREACHER
I musta did somethin' wrong... said somethin' to you during my blackout.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

223 CONTINUED:

PREACHER (CONT'D)
See, I have these spells -- it's somethin' like epilepsy and the doctors haven't found a cure for it yet -- and when I come to, I've said and done all kinds of crazy things. Now, the last thing I remember... we were in bed talking and I blacked out.

BRENDA
I don't wanna hear it.

PREACHER
It always happens! See, now usually the blackout come when I'm really excited or happy and the adrenaline in me just rushes to my head and I go unconscious.

Brenda turns around. He's standing there smiling. She looks behind him.

224 REVERSE SHOT - BRENDA'S POV

Sandra is coming down the hall.

CUT TO:

225 ANOTHER ANGLE

Brenda looks at Preacher and smiles.

BRENDA
Oh, of course I'll forgive you, baby.

She wraps her arms around his neck and kisses him deeply. He starts for a moment and then gets into it, putting his arms around her. Abruptly she stops and puts her hand on his chest, pushing him away.

BRENDA
(continuing)
That's for yesterday, bastard!

She turns and walks away. Preacher is stunned.

(CONTINUED)

225 CONTINUED:

He turns and looks after her and sees Sandra coming toward him. He starts. Brenda reaches the Girls' Room just as Sandra gets to her. She throws Sandra a sweet smile and exits into the Girls' Room. Sandra looks at Preacher and starts toward him.

PREACHER
Sandra, love, I want you to know that in a moment's...

CUT TO:

226 INT. SCHOOL - CLASSROOM DOOR - MR. MASON

Mr. Mason is at the door greeting some of the kids. He is very dark, lean, and very physical. He is fortyish with grey showing through his neat, military-type haircut. His dress is conservative but there is a certain "cool" way that he wears his clothes. His speech varies from very articulate to almost street language. A GIRL enters the classroom.

MR. MASON
Hi, Louise -- nice dress.

In the b.g. WE SEE Damon put on a very exaggerated, hip look as he approaches Mr. Mason.

MR. MASON
(continuing)
Hi George, Mabel... Bob...

They all nod and say,

ALL
Afternoon, Mr. Mason.

They go into the classroom. Damon starts passing. He has his sunglasses on.

DAMON
Afternoon, Mr. Mason.

He keeps going.

MR. MASON
Hey, wait a minute. Take off those shades.

(CONTINUED)

226 CONTINUED

DAMON
These is my shades, and my face.

MR. MASON
You pull that bad act in the streets, but you don't move me. Now, you take off those shades before I bounce you off those hall lockers.

Damon stands looking for a beat, then slowly takes off the glasses. Mr. Mason reacts to his puffed eyes.

MR. MASON
(continuing)
Put them back on. And you better get at least a 'C' on your mid-term.

Damon puts on glasses.

As Damon exits into the class the f.g. BLURS slightly. As the b.g. CRYSTALLIZES, we SEE Ghengis, Preacher, Cecil and Tyrone. Ghengis goes into class. Preacher is somewhat shame-faced.

PREACHER
Afternoon, Mr. Mason.

ME. MASON
I want to talk to you. Where you been all last week?

PREACHER
(coughing)
I had the flu all week. I'm just getting over it.

MR. MASON
That's a lie, because I went by your house twice last week.

PREACHER
I had to stay over at my aunt's house, because my Mother was workin' and couldn't stay home and take care of me.

The BELL RINGS and they start into the classroom. As the door shuts,

CUT TO:

227 INT. HISTORY CLASS - MED. SHOT - DAY
All the windows are broken and patched.

227 CONTINUED:

It has the feeling it was all old when it was made. Damon is sitting.

228 CLOSEUP - DAMON

He stares.

229 REVERSE SHOT - DAMON'S POV

Ghengis is talking to Tyrone.

230 CLOSEUP - DAMON

He continues to stare, rubbing his knuckles. Preacher walks by talking to Brenda, who ignores him. CAMERA HOLDS ON Preacher and Brenda. The BELL RINGS.

MR. MASON
Okay, hold it. Alright now, class starts right now. As of this point, everybody in class shut up!

All the students move for their seats.

231 MED. SHOT - MR. MASON

Everybody gets quiet.

MR. MASON
Let me start by telling you again... If you fail this test, you fail the course.

232 OMITTED

CUT TO:

233 MED. SHOT - MR. MASON

At the blackboard.

MR. MASON
Anyone caught cheating is an automatic fail for both persons. Which reminds me...Preach, get over here.

Mr. Mason points to his own desk.

234. MED. SHOT - PREACHER

He gets up and starts crossing to the desk. The gang gets upset.

CUT TO:

235 MED. SHOT - MR. MASON

At the blackboard, his back is still to the class as he writes on the board.

MR. MASON
The first half of the test will cover the Civil War.

236 OMITTED

237 WIDER ANGLE - FAVORING CLASSROOM DOOR

Mason crosses to the door, opens it. TWO black, plain-clothes DETECTIVES enter. Mr. Mason greets them smiling.

MR. MASON
How are you, George?

DETECTIVE #1
...I'm alright, David.

MR. MASON
What're you doin' around here?

DETECTIVE #1
I have warrants for the arrest of Richard Morris and Leroy Jackson.

He hands the warrants to Mr. Mason, who looks down at them.

238 TWO SHOT - GHENGIS AND PREACHER

They gasp.

CUT TO:

239 INT. POLICE STATION WAITING ROOM

Stone, Robert, Preacher and Ghengis are seated together.

CONTINUED

239 CONTINUED:

WE HEAR FOOTSTEPS.

STONE
Remember... don't tell them honkeys nothin'.

The door opens and a COP comes in.

COP
Okay... this way!

They all get up, looking around nervously, and follow the Cop through the door. CAMERA FOLLOWS them down a hallway lined with doors on each side. The Cop stops and points to Ghengis.

COP
(continuing; indicates door)
You... in there!

Ghengis splits off from the group, exits into the room. The Cop shuts the door and moves down the hall with the group and the CAMERA FOLLOWING. He points to Preacher.

COP
(continuing)
You... in there!

Preacher exits into the room. The Cop closes the door and proceeds to the next door. He points to Stone.

DISSOLVE TO:

240 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - MED. SHOT - DAY

Ghengis is with Detective #2.

DETECTIVE #2
What did you do last Friday night?

GHENGIS
I was at this party, on the Westside.

DETECTIVE #2
What time did you leave the party?

(CONTINUED)

240 CONTINUED:

GHENGIS
About one.

DETECTIVE #2
What did you do after you left the party?

GHENGIS
I went home.

DETECTIVE #2
Who were you with?

GHENGIS
I was by myself.

CUT TO:

241 INT. ANOTHER INTERROGATION ROOM - CLOSEUP - PREACHER

PREACHER
Yessir... me and Ghengis, I mean Richard Morris, went to this party on the Southside and we didn't get out until about four A.M.

DETECTIVE #1
... and what time did you leave the party?

PREACHER
About three. We caught the Jackson bus and we rode all the way...

DETECTIVE #1
Wait a minute... wait a minute. The last time you told the story you caught the El.

Preacher snaps his fingers, remembering.

PREACHER
Oh, yeah... that's right... uh, we did catch the El... it was after we caught the bus.

DETECTIVE #1
Look, I'm tired of you lyin'.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

241 CONTINUED:

DETECTIVE #1 (CONT'D)
For the last three hours you told me four different stories.

PREACHER
Mister, I swear on a stack of Bibles... I ain't been in no stolen car... ever... in my life! And I wouldn't lie!

242 ANOTHER ANGLE - DETECTIVE

CAMERA MOVES IN on Detective. He looks disgustedly at Preacher, crosses to his chair, sits down and looks at Preacher very hard and angry.

DETECTIVE #1
Bullshit!

CUT TO:

243 INT. HALLWAY AT OFFICE DOOR-MED. SHOT MR. MASON

MR. MASON
Thanks George. I won't forget it!
See you Wednesday night.

DETECTIVE #1
Get out of here!

CUT TO:

244 INT. WAITING ROOM - POLICE STATION

Preacher, Ghengis, Stone and Robert are seated together.

PREACHER
(to Ghengis)
Oh, no! I told 'em that we left the party at four and that we didn't see Stone and Robert at all!

STONE
Aw, I told you not to say nothin'!

The door opens. A guard enters.

DETECTIVE #2
Morris and Jackson.

Ghengis gets up and walks over to the guard.

GHENGIS
What's goin' on?

DETECTIVE #2
You're going home.

Preacher and the others jump up happy and surprised.

(CONTINUED)

244 CONTINUED:

STONE
What about us?

DETECTIVE #2
No... You're stayin' here. You gotta go to trial.

Preacher and Ghengis, look at each other, puzzled.

DETECTIVE #2
(continuing)
Come on! I ain't got all day!

Preacher and Ghengis, still puzzled, follow him out.

245 MED. SHOT

Stone and Robert exchange knowing looks.

CUT TO:

246 thru 248 OMITTED

DISSOLVE TO:

249 INT. CECIL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cecil's little brother is lying on the bed, asleep. Preach is sitting on the dresser. Cecil, wearing only his undershorts, enters.

CECIL
Man, it's three o'clock in the mornin'! Don't you think you oughtta go home?

PREACHER
Yeah, I just wanna make sure Mama's sleep good, 'cause I don't need no whipping.

Cecil yawns. Preach gets up and starts out.

CECIL
(yawning)
Okay, I'll see you at school tomorrow.

The door clicks shut softly. Cecil pulls back the cover and gets into the bed and lies down. He jumps out of bed as if bitten.

CECIL
(continuing)
Christ!

He throws back the covers. His little brother wakes up, all sleepy.

CECIL
(continuing)
You pee'd the bed. Get up!

(CONTINUED)

249 CONTINUED:

He pushes Jeffrey off the bed and pulls the covers back further.

CECIL
(continuing)
How'd my 'Playboy' get in there?

JEFFREY
I was lookin' at it and fell asleep.

CECIL
Damn! You messed it up and I ain't even read it.

Jeffrey lays his head on the bed.

CECIL
(continuing)
Get up from there!

Jeffrey gets up.

CECIL
(continuing)
Go to the bathroom! I don't want you peein' in bed again.

Jeffrey sniffles.

CECIL
(continuing)
I ought to make you sleep in the bathtub.

Jeffrey starts crying.

CECIL
(continuing; softening)
You help me change the sheets 'fore Momma finds out.

Jeffrey smiles.

CUT TO:

250 EXT. PREACH'S HOUSE
He is climbing up on the second story porch.

250A INT. PREACH'S BEDROOM
He eases the window up, quietly, and he crawls into the shadows. It's dark!

250 CONTINUED:

He takes his clothes off quickly, dropping them on the floor as he feels his way along the wall of his room. He slowly opens the door to the hall and peeks out. The light floods in from the hall. Preach looks curiously and then, acting as if he just woke up, his eyes drooping and yawning broadly, goes toward the living room/kitchen area where his mother sleeps. CAMERA FOLLOWS. He looks and straightens immediately.

CUT TO:

251 PREACH'S POV

The room is empty. Preach looks around and CAMERA PANS to a table with a note on it.

252 WIDER ANGLE - PREACH

He walks curiously over to the table and picks up the note. We read it with him: "Dear Preach, Momma called and said she had to work overtime and she'll be home a little late. Love, Dee." Preach crumbles the note up disgustedly and throws it in the garbage can. We HEAR the SOUND of a KEY in the lock. Preach turns around, the door opens and his mother enters. Preach smiles, feigning a look of innocence.

PREACHER
Oh, hi, Momma!

She looks at him with anger in her eyes.

MRS. JACKSON
Don't 'Hi, Momma' me. What are you doin' ridin' around in a stolen car?

PREACHER
Momma, it wasn't me... they got the wrong somebody! I...

MRS. JACKSON
Don't lie to me.

PREACHER
Well, Momma, I swear, it wasn't me! It was a mistake! It was somebody else that looked like me.

(CONTINUED)

252 CONTINUED:

MRS. JACKSON
Shut up! I don't wanna hear! And what's this Dee tells me about you having naked girls in your room? Now you got yourself arrested. You know I have to work three jobs... and while I'm gone I gotta be able to trust you alone.

PREACHER
You can trust me, Momma.

MRS. JACKSON
You go in there and get your belt!

She sits down and crosses her arms under her breast with an air of finality.

PREACHER
Yes, ma'am.

He turns and walks slowly away. The CAMERA SWINGS AROUND to Preach's back and holds as he exits into his room. There's a quiet beat, and Preach, hesitantly, comes out of his room with his belt extended in his hand. He walks TOWARD CAMERA.

PREACHER
(continuing)
Momma, listen to me... I honestly...

He stops short and looks.

253 PREACH'S POV

His mom is sitting there, her head has dropped to her chest, she is obviously asleep.

254 MED. SHOT - PREACH

He drops his hand and walks over to his mother and rubs her head and he looks at her. He crosses slowly to the couch and starts letting it out.

DISSOLVE TO:

255 INT. GYM - WIDE ANGLE - DAY

The kids are streaming out of the locker room into the gym by ones and twos, not whole crowds at a time. They move about... some are doing calisthenics, some are working on the horses. Tyrone is bouncing a basketball and shooting hoops.

256 MED. SHOT - TYRONE

bouncing the ball and shooting hoops.

257 ANOTHER ANGLE

Door to the gym. Ghengis and Preach enter in street clothes from outside. The basketball bounces and hits Ghengis. He takes it, drops his gym bag, jumps up and shoots a jumpshot.

258 CLOSEUP - BASKETBALL

as it goes through the hoop.

259 WIDER ANGLE

Tyrone catches the ball as it drops down.

GHENGIS
That's how you put it through the hoop, junior.

Tyrone doesn't react. He just bounces the ball and keeps shooting.

CUT TO:

260 TWO SHOT - GHENGIS & PREACH

They look at each other. CAMERA FOLLOWS them over to Tyrone and WIDENS into a THREE SHOT. As they cross:

KID
I got Ghengis!

TYRONE
I don't wanna play with a dude that snitches on his partners.

CECIL
What are you talking about?

(CONTINUED)

260 CONTINUED:

TYRONE
Preach and Ghengis told on Stone and Robert to get out of jail.

GHENGIS
(stops short)
That's a lie!

Preach reacts.

CECIL
Yeah.

TYRONE
Okay, if you didn't tell, how come you out and and Stone and Robert ain't?

GHENGIS
Hey, man, I don't know!

TYRONE
(skeptical)
Yeah...

Preach jumps up.

PREACHER
We didn't say nothin'!

KID
Hey, Bobby, you wanna play with me? I don't want him on my side. Somebody kick y'all ass!

DAMON
Don't worry, Stone and Robert gonna do just that when they get out!

We HEAR the ear-splitting SOUND of a WHISTLE.

* 261 OMITTED *
and
263

263 INT. HALLWAY - SCHOOL

BELL RINGS. We SEE the door to Mr. Mason's classroom. The class is letting out. Several of the group exit and walk out into the hall. Ghengis comes out and Mr. Mason stops him at the door.

MR. MASON
Ghengis, have you seen Preach?

GHENGIS
Not since gym, Mr. Mason.

MR. MASON
You don't know why he didn't come to class?

GHENGIS
Sure don't.

Mr. Mason shakes his head and starts to walk down the corridor toward the boys' bathroom.

CUT TO:

264 INT. BOYS' BATHROOM - ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY

CLOSE on corner.

VOICE
Lick die.

Two dice roll up, bounce off the wall and stop. CAMERA PULLS BACK TO ESTABLISHING SHOT. High ceilings and half-tiled walls, covered in every conceivable spot with graffiti, up to about six feet, where it thins out and suddenly stops. One small open window in the corner lets the only sunlight in the dense haze of smoke, filtering in through a metal grill. Along one wall run three or four open stalls, each contains one toilet. In the far corner sits a young teenager, with an air of privacy, as if there is a door on the stall. He is oblivious to the small bundles of youths around him. A tall, thin youth who sits astride the row of double urinals deals black-jack to four gamblers. In front of the two and the urinals on either side is another group shooting dice over in the corner. As the scene falls in, a tide of SOUND hits you.

265 MED. SHOT - GAMBLER

sitting astride the urinals.

(CONTINUED)

265 CONTINUED:

THIRD GAMBLER
Dealer hit sixteen.

He drops a card. The CAMERA PANS to MEDIUM on Preach as he enters.

FIRST GUY (O.S.)
Oh, man, so what. So the Cubs didn't win this year. I still say they'll win next year.

Preach stands and looks at all the filled urinals.

SECOND GUY (O.S.)
Not unless they get three more cats like Ernie Banks.

Preach crosses to the commode stall, CAMERA FOLLOWS.

266 PREACH'S POV

FIRST GAMBLER (O.S.)
Eight. Read them and weep.

THIRD GAMBLER (O.S.)
You better get your hands off my money, your point nine.

There is a TEENAGER in the stall reading a comic book.

TEENAGER
(doesn't look up)
You in the light.

267 MED. SHOT - PREACH

He moves to the next stall.

SECOND GAMBLER (O.S.)
You in?

FOURTH GAMBLER (O.S.)
Deal!

Preach crosses to fifth gambler.

PREACHER
Look, if you ain't pissin', you better step out of the way, or get pissed on.

(CONTINUED)

267 CONTINUED:

FIRST GAMBLER (O.S.)
What you mean nine?

The fifth gambler unzips his pants, starts psssin'. The others keep playing cards.

268 WIDER ANGLE - BATHROOM

Mr. Mason enters. All look.

VOICES
It's Mr. Mason!
Mr. Mason!
Mr. Mason!

We can HEAR the words floating through the bathroom. All the kids stop what they're doing and turn around and look.

MR. MASON
Umm hmm... You boys better be gettin' out of here. Class gettin' ready to start.

They all stop.

MR. MASON
(continuing)
You can leave the dice and the cards.

The kids climb down from their perches and start out.

MR. MASON
(continuing; to Preach)
What happened to you today? Don't you want to graduate?

PREACHER
Don't matter.

MR. MASON
Oh, man! For fifteen years I been pushin' kids through this school just so when they applied for a job they could put 'High school graduate' on their applications. I don't understand you Jackson. You read poetry & history books for fun & you got the worst grades in two states. You didn't even try to make up the mid-term you missed.

268 CONTINUED:

Preach looks down at the floor, shame-faced, wiggling his toes around.

MR. MASON
(continuing)
Son, what is it you want? With your brains, you can have it. Whatever it is, knowledge will get it for you.

PREACHER
(continuing)
You through, Mr. Mason?

MR. MASON
Yeah, I'm through. Next time you get in trouble, don't count on me... Jail or anything else.

He turns and walks away. Preach looks after him a beat.

PREACHER
Hey, Mr. Mason! You got us out...?

Mr. Mason stops.

MR. MASON
Yeah, who else?

Preach runs to him and hugs him joyfully.

PREACHER
Mr. Mason... Mr. Mason... Mr. Mason...!

Mr. Mason looks at him strangely.

(CONTINUED)

268 CONTINUED: (2)

PREACHER
(continuing)
I got to go find Ghengis.

He runs out of the bathroom. Mr. Mason stands staring at him.

DISSOLVE TO:

269 EXT. WELLS STREET - DAY

Jimmy Lee is standing in front of another tenement building talking to a white dude in a well-made, conservative suit.

JIMMY LEE
Top floor, last apartment in the rear.

The man turns and starts toward the door. Preach comes running up to Jimmy Lee excitedly.

PREACHER
Hey, Jimmy Lee! You seen Ghengis?

JIMMY LEE
Yeah, man, he's at my house. He brought some chick up there a couple hours ago to get down.

PREACHER
Well, is he still up there...?
I gotta talk to him.

JIMMY LEE
Yeah, he probably up there...
Come on, man, I'll take you by there... I gotta go home anyway.

DISSOLVE TO:

270 EXT. JIMMY LEE'S APARTMENT

Jimmy Lee and Preach are standing in front of the door. Preach is pounding the door.

GHENGIS (O.S.)
Just a minute...

Jimmy Lee and Preach stand there.

(CONTINUED)

270 CONTINUED:

JIMMY LEE
Hey, man, hurry up in there... I ain't got all day.

GHENGIS (O.S.)
Just a minute, man. You ain't in that big a hurry.

271 REVERSE SHOT

as Jimmy Lee and Preach come through the door.

PREACHER
Ghengis, guess what?!

Preach freezes. The smile on his face instantly disappears.

272 REVERSE SHOT

Sandra is buttoning up her blouse and Ghengis is wearing only his pants. They're on the couch.

CUT TO:

273 WIDER ANGLE

Preach turns around and starts out.

Ghengis goes after him. Before Preach gets out the door, Ghengis grabs his arm.

GHENGIS
Wait a minute, man!

PREACHER
Son-of-a-bitch!

Preach turns around quick and swings at Ghengis. Without thinking, Ghengis reacts and catches Preach's hand in mid-air, effortlessly. Preach looks at Sandra, embarrassed, and snatches away.

GHENGIS
Hey, man, wait a minute... let me talk to you.

JIMMY LEE
Hey, man, what's goin' down?

(CONTINUED)

273 CONTINUED:

PREACHER
I got nothin' to say to you.

GHENGIS
Preach used to go with her.

JIMMY LEE
(amazed)
You mad about some bitch?

GHENGIS
Hey, man, come on... Let me talk to you, man... please!

Ghengis steps forward. Jimmy Lee pushes him back.

JIMMY LEE
Leave him alone. Let him do what he wants.

Preach runs out the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

274 INT. MARTHA'S

There's a lot of people and NOISE. The door opens and Preach enters in a new cap. He looks around.

275 REVERSE SHOT - PREACH'S POV

Brenda is in a booth.

276 MED. SHOT - PREACH

He walks over to the booth. CAMERA MOVES TO TWO SHOT.

PREACHER
Can I talk to you?

BRENDA
Okay.

Preach takes off his cap and sets it on the table as he sits down.

We HEAR Stone's voice.

(CONTINUED)

276 CONTINUED:

STONE (O.S.)
Hey, what's goin' on?

Hearing Stone's voice, Preach straightens up.

DAMON (O.S.)
Hey, Stone, Robert... What happened? When did y'all get out?

ROBERT (O.S.)
Aw, we just got out this morning. Our folks got one of their organizations to get us out on bail.

Preach picks up his cap, hides under it and says to Brenda with a deep voice:

PREACHER
Look, why don't you go pick up your books and I'll meet you at the El station.

Preach is fidgeting and holding his head down with the cap covering the side of his face.

BRENDA
(reluctantly)
Oh, okay... In fifteen minutes?

PREACHER
Yeah, yeah!

Brenda gets up and leaves the booth. Preach watches her as much as he can without turning his head. His eyes move forward and he stares straight ahead.

277 MED. SHOT - PREACH

He slides out of the booth and starts walking toward the dancers in the back.

CUT TO:

278 PREACH'S POV

A sign which says "Men."

279 ANOTHER ANGLE

Preach has his collar up and his head down and he's trying to walk "cool." Damon steps in front of him. Preach stops and looks up.

280 CLOSEUP - DAMON

An evil smile plays across his face.

DAMON
(very loudly)
Hey, Preach... Hey, Preach, what's happenin'...

Damon laughs and mocks friendliness.

281 MED. SHOT - STONE & ROBERT

They look up and react.

282 MED. TWO SHOT - PREACH & DAMON

Preach looks around, panic stricken. Damon laughs like hell. Preach is frantically looking for a hole to crawl into. He stops, turns and manages a great big smile.

PREACHER
(enthusiastically)
Hey, Stone! Hey, man... when did ya get out?

Stone looks and Preach goes further into his act.

PREACHER
(continuing)
Hey, I know what you're thinkin'... But, dig it... Mr. Mason got us out.

STONE
Bullshit!

ROBERT
We hip to your lyin' ass.

PREACHER
Hey, man, let's check it out... and find what really went down and go from there... What you say?

STONE
I'm gonna stomp your ears together, you lying little bastard.

Preach's eyes get big and he backs up.

(CONTINUED)

283. MED. SHOT - DAMON

He sticks his foot out. Preach trips and stumbles into the dancing kids, fighting hard to keep his balance. Damon laughs.

284 MED. SHOT - STONE & ROBERT

They turn around just in time to see Preach straighten up on his feet and run like mad, bumping through the crowd, heading toward the men's room.

They take off after him. The crowd slows them down as try try to maneuver to follow Preach. Preach reaches the backdoor and gives it a yank. It doesn't open. He stands there for a beat. Preach turns around and looks.

285 PREACH'S POV

Stone and Robert are bearing down on him.

286 ANOTHER ANGLE

Preach runs over to the toilet and snatches the door open. There is a GIRL sitting on the can.

287 INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM

Preach jumps inside and slams the bolt home.

GIRL
Get outta here!

PREACHER
That's what I'm trying to do.

CUT TO:

288 EXT. GIRLS' BATHROOM

Stone hits the door, shouting.

STONE
Come on out here, you punk!

CUT TO:

289 INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM

The Girl is wearing pants which are down around her ankles. She tries to cover herself with her arms over her lap.

PREACHER
Forget you!

GIRL
Get outta here!

PREACHER
Don't worry, I'm not gonna hurt you...

He crosses to the window.

STONE (O.S.)
Come on outta there. Get your ass out here.

The door shakes as it is POUNDED from the other side. Preach snatches the window and it won't open!

CUT TO:

290 EXT. GIRLS' BATHROOM

Stone hitting the door with his shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

290 CONTINUED:

STONE
I'm gonna break your head when I get my hands on you!

291 INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM - MED. SHOT

Preach is struggling fiercely with the window, which won't budge.

GIRL
(fiercely)
The whole world will be in here and it's all your fault!

PREACHER
Damn it!

He unlocks the window. He turns and smiles at the Girl.

GIRL
Will you get outta here?

Preach turns, tries to open the window. It still won't open! He struggles again.

292 EXT. GIRLS' BATHROOM - MED. SHOT

Stone, Robert and Damon are throwing their shoulders against the flimsy door.

MARTHA (O.S.)
Get away from that door.

Martha ENTERS SCENE with a meat cleaver, waving it in the air. Everybody reacts to her by freezing.

MARTHA
(continuing)
Git outta here! All of ya!

They straighten up and start to move. Martha waves the cleaver.

MARTHA
(continuing)
Hey! I can use this! Now you take that crap outside!

They start moving cautiously toward the door.

(CONTINUED)

292 CONTINUED:

STONE
All right, we'll leave, but he's got to come out sometime! And we'll be there.

293 INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM - MED. CLOSE

Preach is standing there listening at the door.

PREACHER
They're gone!

294 MED. SHOT - GIRL

GIRL
Well, good! Now you can get outta here!

295 TWO SHOT

Preach starts for the door.

GIRL
Wait a minute, don't open the door. They can't see me like this! Turn around.

PREACHER
Jesus Christ!

GIRL
I don't want anyone to see me like this.

296 ANOTHER ANGLE

CAMERA SHOOTS from behind Girl as Preach turns, looking at the door.

PREACHER
I ain't even thinking about lookin' at you... I gotta get away from here.

GIRL
Keep your head turned.

(CONTINUED)

296 CONTINUED:

PREACHER
I told you I ain't going' to look, now come on!

The girl stands up and starts pulling up her pants. Preach turns around and takes a good look.

PREACHER
(continuing; smiling)
Nice, real nice.

GIRL
(angry)
Ohh.

Preach opens the door quickly and exits.

PREACHER
(to Martha)
Is there a back way out?

CUT TO:

297 EXT. SUBWAY STOP - DAY

Brenda is standing at the subway stop looking at her watch and watching for Preach. A train pulls up. She starts to climb the stairs, changes her mind, and the train takes off. She looks around for Preach. Ghengis ENTERS SCENE and walks up to her.

CHENGIS
Hey!

Brenda looks at him.

GHENGIS
(continuing)
Look, have you seen Preach?

BRENDA
Yeah, he was supposed to meet me here. The last time I saw him he was in Martha's. Stone and Robert had just come in.

GHENGIS
(nervous)
How long ago was that?

BRENDA
About twenty minutes ago.

HE TAKES OFF.

298 OMITTED
&
299

300 EXT. ALLEY/VACANT LOT - DAY

Preach emerges from a door in the rear of Martha's, and starts to sneak off from the back of Martha's down the alley. As he crosses the vacant lot Robert and Stone, who are standing on the sidewalk in front of Martha's, spot him. They take off after him, cutting across the lot. Damon, who is also in front of Martha's, follows the chase.

300A ANOTHER ANGLE

Preach whips around the building into a narrow gangway. He stumbles along broken bottles and debris out into the street. Stone and Robert follow hot on his heels.

300B ANOTHER ANGLE

Preach slips through passing traffic, runs down the street, and around another corner. Overhead, "L" train roars past. Stone and Robert turn the corner.

300C TIGHT TWO SHOT

Stone and Robert, as they look around puzzled.

300D THEIR POV

SEVERAL ANGLES of the intersection with the "L" tracks overhead and no Preach in sight.

CUT TO:

301 EXT. EL PLATFORM - MED. SHOT - DAY

Brenda is standing there and Preach runs up.

BRENDA
Oh, hi!

PREACHER
You not late for work, are you?

BRENDA
Yeah, I guess I am.

(CONTINUED)

301 CONTINUED:

PREACHER
(touched)
You mean you waited for me and now you're late for work?

BRENDA
Of course.

Preach cups her face in his hands and kisses her. She smiles at him. A train pulls up. A crowd has gathered around them and everyone climbs on.

CUT TO:

302 INT. TRAIN - DAY

It is crowded and Preach and Brenda make their way toward the back.

BRENDA
Oh, by the way, Ghengis was looking for you.

PREACHER
Forget Ghengis, I'm in love.

Brenda giggles as he puts his arm around her.

CUT TO:

303 EXT. UNDER THE "L" TRACK - DAY

Robert is holding Ghengis from behind. Stone is beating him savagely. He hits him in the stomach time after time.

GHENGIS
I didn't do it! I didn't do it!

303A MED. SHOT - DAMON

watching the fight with sadistic enjoyment.

DAMON
Kill that son of a bitch, kill him!

CAMERA PUSHES IN to his smiling face.

303B Robert lets Ghengis go and Stone knees him in the stomach. Damon runs in and grabs Ghengis and slams him up against the steel El trestle. Ghengis falls to the ground. Stone and Robert step back stunned. They look at Ghengis on the ground and then at Damon. A passing TRAIN SCREECHES around the curve, drowning out Stone's voice as he shouts to Damon. They turn and run away. Damon hesitates, and runs in the other dirction.

Ghengis slowly and painfully starts to pull himself up off the ground. He can't make it and falls back into the debris. The SCREECHING SOUND of the "L". The shadow passes swiftly over his fallen body and the CAMERA PULLS WAY BACK SHOWING the lone body lying under the "L" tracks and life going on as usual.

303C CLOSE UP GHENGIS: HEAD

His head hits the sharp edge and his eyes roll back.

CUT TO:

304 OMITTED

305 INT. PREACH'S LIVING ROOM - TWO SHOT

Brenda and Preach are sitting on the couch, kissing. Preach wears only his pants. His hand is under her blouse. We HEAR a KNOCK at the door. He looks up.

BRENDA
Don't answer it.

PREACHER
It might be one of my stupid sisters, and they'll climb through the window.

BRENDA
Oh, okay.

She straightens her blouse. CAMERA FOLLOWS Preach to the door. He opens it.

CUT TO:

306 INT./EXT. PREACH'S FRONT DOOR - MED SHOT.

Pooter is standing outside.

306 CONTINUED:

PREACHER
(fearfully)
What do you want?

POOTER
(sadly)
Man, Stone and them caught Ghengis and got him really bad.

PREACHER
Man, you lyin'!

POOTER
Naw, man, they got him behind the Sedgwick "L" station.

Preach looks at him a beat and runs past him out into the street.

CUT TO:

306A EXT. UNDER "L" TRACK - DAY

Preach runs underneath the "L" tracks to the spot where Ghengis was fighting. Looks around but finds no Ghengis.

CUT TO:

307 EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - MED. SHOT

Preach is running barefoot and barechested into the basketball court. Cecil is there, playing basketball. Preach runs over.

CECIL
Fool! What are you doin' in the street half naked?

PREACHER
Hey, man, you seen Ghengis?

CECIL
No.

Preach runs off.

CUT TO:

308 EXT. MARTHA'S - MED. SHOT - DAY

Tyrone is standing there talking to a chick. Preach runs up to him.

PREACHER
You seen Ghengis?

TYRONE
No, man, I ain't seen...

Preach runs off.

CUT TO:

309 EXT. GHENGIS' HOUSE - MED. CLOSE - DAY

Preach is standing there beating on the door. The door opens and Jimmy Lee is there with tears running down his face.

310 CLOSEUP - PREACH

He looks.

311 MED. SHOT - PREACH

He drops slowly to his knees.

PREACHER
Ghengis!

CUT TO:

312 EXT. CEMETERY - LONG SHOT

Small group of people are gathered around an open grave. Their cars are clustered nearby. Flowers, funeral wreaths, are lying on the ground between the cars and gravesite. The CAMERA ZOOMS SLOWLY IN to a CLOSER ANGLE SHOWING Ghengis' mother, who is sobbing quietly, being held by Ghengis' father and his sister. A neighbor woman is holding the two babies. Jimmy Lee and Preacher's mother.

(CONTINUED)

312 CONTINUED:

CAMERA PANS SLOWLY around the faces of the crowd. We SEE Cecil, Tyrone and Dorothy, Sandra and Johnny Mae, Brenda, and some of the other kids. CAMERA STOPS on Pooter's face, tears are streaming down his cheeks. We HEAR the Reverend's voice in the b.g. as we SEE the casket being lowered into the earth.

REVEREND (O.S.)
... and this young boy, cut down in the flower of his youth, a credit to his community, the pride of his mother and father.

313 MED. CLOSE - BRENDA

She is looking for someone.

314 MED. SHOT

Mrs. Morris bends over and picks up a handful of dirt. She throws it into the open grave. The CAMERA ANGLES UPWARD. In the b.g., on the hill, we SEE a lone figure standing.

315 MED. CLOSE - PREACH

He is holding a small gym bag. He stands there with his cap pulled down on the side, a short jacket, Levis, and regular shoes. He stands there looking.

316 WIDE SHOT

as the funeral party starts towards their cars.

316A MED. SHOT

The lead car pulls away, several others follow THROUGH THE FRAME.

317 MED. CLOSE - BRENDA

She turns and walks away.

318 WIDE SHOT

We SEE others moving away from the grave toward their cars.

(CONTINUED)

318 CONTINUED:

Brenda, who is in the group, stops and turns worriedly. She continues TOWARD CAMERA. We PAN her down into a car. Her car takes off.

318A MED. SHOT - PREACH

as he starts to move toward the grave.

318B TIGHT GROUP SHOT

Cecil, Pooter and Tyrone, walking towards their car. They look up and see Preach.

GROUP
(to Preach)
Hey, man, you wanna ride back with us?

318C CLOSEUP - PREACH

shakes his head and waves them off.

318D GROUP SHOT

As Cecil and Tyrone get into their car, Pooter stands at the rear door, turns and looks back at the grave.

318E MED. SHOT - PREACH

As he walks past the car, PAN WITH HIM to Pooter. He puts his arm around Pooter, who is still crying. CAMERA MOVES IN to a TIGHT TWO SHOT. Pooter looks up at Preach and says:

POOTER
Man, I really loved him.

Preach nods.

PREACHER
Yeah, he loved you, too.

Pooter shakes his head, starts to get into the car as Preach walks toward the gravesite.

319 INT. BACK SEAT OF CAR

As Pooter gets in, he turns to look back at Preach and, as the car takes off, through the back window, we can SEE Preach walking toward the gravesite.

319A EXT. CAR - MED. SHOT

The car pulls off around the corner. As it passes the car that Brenda was in, we SEE that car has stopped and that she is moving outside, moving out of the door, looking in Preach's direction.

CUT TO:

320 MED. SHOT

Preach standing at the open grave. He pulls out a bottle, opens the cap, starts to take a drink.

320A ANOTHER ANGLE

He stops and pours some in the grave.

PREACHER
For the dudes who ain't here.

He takes a hit, looks.

PREACHER
(continuing)
Man, you know... sometimes I be walkin' or sittin' somewhere, and I look up expecting to see you comin' 'round the corner, or hear your voice callin' my name. I almost expect you to go to Hollywood with me. Don't worry, I'll make it. I can lie and steal too good not to survive. Dig it, I wrote a poem for you. I was gonna read it to you, but I know you don't like poetry. But I'm gonna give it to you anyway, whether you like it or not.

He throws the poem into the grave.

321 ANOTHER ANGLE

Brenda steps up behind him and slips her hand into his. They look at each other, then back down at the grave

321A CLOSEUP- PAPER POEM IS WRITTEN ON

being covered with dirt.

322 MED. SHOT

They turn and walk away towards Brenda's car. The poem continues over. Preach walks Brenda up to the car, they stand at the door for a second, kiss goodbye. She gets in, the car drives off. PAN with the car as it winds through the cemetary.

322A CLOSEUP - PREACH'S FACE

as he watches the car disappear.

CUT TO:

322B WIDE SHOT

Preach leaving cemetary gates with his gym bag.

322C EXT. STREET

Preach passing a drunk with two crutches and his hand out. In the other hand he shows Preach his empty wine bottle.

323 thru 328 OMITTED

329 CLOSEUP - PREACH

He's smiling.

330 MEDIUM SHOT

Drunk has a full, new bottle of wine, one crutch and is smiling happily.

CUT TO:

331 EXT. HIGHWAY

A truck is screaming along the highway. PAN WITH it and s on Preach, leaning on a crutch with a sign in front of hi that reads "California or Bust". A car stops and a MAN ju out and helps Preach to the car. It zooms off down the highway as the END CREDITS ROLL UP.

322C CONTINUED:

PREACH
No, man.

WINO
What about some reefer.
I gotta sell you something,
so I can get myself a taste.

PREACH
Look I ain't go no money, but
I got a proposition! How would
you like to get rid of one of
those ugly crutches?

He pulls out his bottle of wine.

329 LONG SHOT

Passing traffic obscures the two huddled figures.

330 CLOSE SHOT

Drunk has a full, new bottle of wine, one crutch and is smiling, happily.

331 EXT. HIGHWAY

A truck is screaming along the highway. PAN WITH it and stop on Preach, leaning on a crutch with a sign in front of him that reads "California or Bust". A car stops and a MAN jumps out and helps Preach to the car. It ZOOMS off down the highway as the END CREDITS ROLL UP.

ALTERNATE ENDING

EXT. STREET - PREACH RUNNING

He's running long. He's running hard. He skids to a stop as he spots Ghengis.

MED. SHOT - PREACH

He stands looking at Ghengis, then slowly goes down on his knees and lifts Ghengis' head.

PREACHER
C'mon, man. Hey, man, c'mon.
(a beat; he screams)
Help! Somebody! Help me!
Please!

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - RAINY DAY